



CBC Newsletter

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For members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.,
Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

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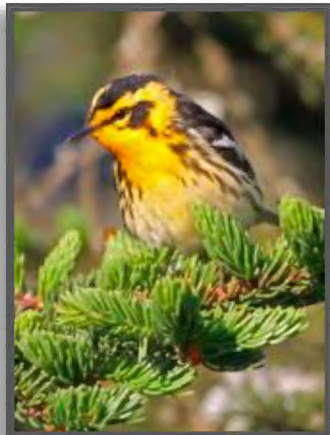
Number 1

Spring 2020: Back to the Mountains

April 30 through May 3, 2020

by Marilyn Westphal & Karyl Gabriel, Meeting Planners

We will be returning to the mountains again for the 2020 Spring CBC Meeting in Black Mountain, NC about 10 miles east of Asheville. So it will be time to brush up once again on those mountain warblers and other neotropical migrants that typically breed or travel through the mountains of WNC.



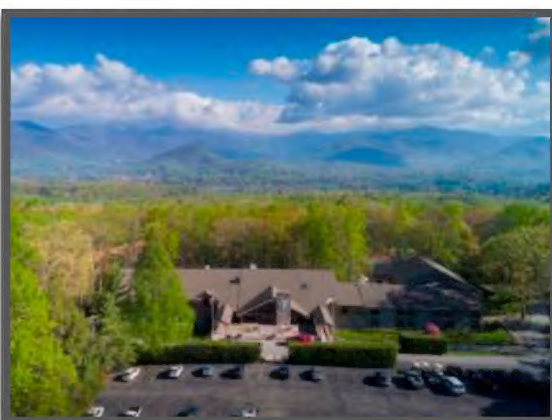
Blackburnian Warbler -
Photo by Jeff Lewis

Black Mountain is close to the entrance to the Blue Ridge Parkway, so many of the trips will be on or near the parkway both north and south of Asheville, as well as in the adjacent Pisgah National Forest, all great places for migratory songbirds. Expect typical mountain breeding species such as Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Chestnut-sided, Canada, Worm-eating, Blackburnian, Swainson's, Cerulean, and many other warblers as well as many tanagers, grosbeaks, thrushes, vireos, and possibly the always unpredictable Red Crossbills. Other sites visited will be along the Blue Ridge Escarpment and at local parks, good places for many other species, and at Max Patch, a historically reliable spot for Golden-winged Warblers and many other warblers. Meeting dates are April 30th to May 3rd.



Max Patch -
Photo courtesy of AshevilleTrails.com

For those who wish to get a head start on warbler identification, Simon Thompson, owner of Ventures Birding Tours and long-time CBC member, will be providing a warm-up class on Thursday evening, so you'll be ready to head out with confidence on Friday morning. On Friday evening, mountain birders Marilyn Westphal and Marcus Simpson will be discussing their project monitoring Northern Saw-whet Owls nest boxes in the WNC mountains, and on Saturday evening John Carpenter of the Wildlife Diversity Project, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, will introduce plans for proposed NC Breeding Bird Atlas, a long-awaited project for many of us in North Carolina. This will be a great opportunity to learn how to get involved.



YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly

The meeting will be held at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly at the Blue Ridge Center, a hotel-like facility, but not a for-profit hotel, on a large, beautiful, wooded property with miles of walking trails and good birding on-site. As this is not a hotel, reservations will be made through CBC. Total cost for single rooms for three nights including three breakfasts (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) and two dinners (Friday and Saturday evening) will be \$374,

and double rooms for three nights including three breakfasts and two dinners will be \$225 per person (there is no tax as this is a non-profit facility). All meals are buffet style and include gluten free and vegetarian choices. Those not staying at the facility can purchase tickets in advance for meal/meals only. For those staying only two nights the rate will be reduced accordingly.

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There may also be an opportunity to purchase bag lunches for those going out on all-day trips if planned sufficiently ahead. All rooms have two queen beds and include access to Wifi, but have no TV's or refrigerators. Bring a cooler if you need to keep something cold. Ice will be provided on-site. As this is a YMCA facility, alcoholic beverages must remain out of sight of the public and can only be consumed inside guest rooms and meeting rooms.

More in-depth information and trip descriptions will be provided in the next newsletter. Looking forward to spring in the mountains!



Welcome New CBC Members!

Daniel Abrahams
Columbia, SC

Nora Futrell
Hanahan, SC

Nancy Hadley
Charleston, SC

Lynn Trenning
Charleston, SC

Daniel Turner
Charleston, SC

Erin Szarek
Conway, SC

Ann Stinely
Cary, NC

Diane Williams
Chapel Hill, NC

Lisa & Jerry Cash
Belmont, NC

Joanne Abel
Durham, NC

Michael O'Sullivan
Columbia, MD

Kathleen Bowman
Southport, NC

Rick, Jennifer & Wren Spencer
Matthews, NC

Patti & Tony Cifelli
Southern Pines, NC

Anne & David Johnson
Purlear, NC

Lori Arent
Raleigh, NC

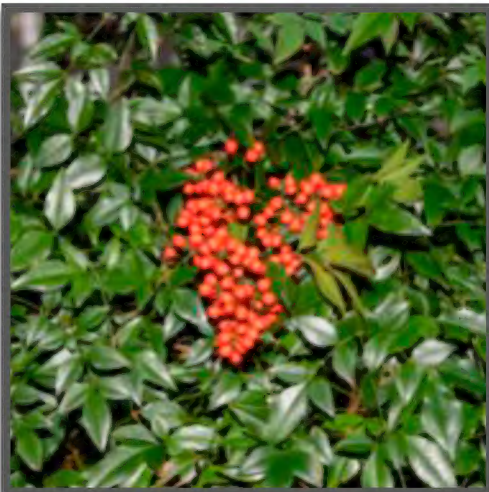
Juliana Henderson
Raleigh, NC

Andrew Wolf
Eldersburg, MD

Kathy Resener
Irmo, SC

William Watkins
Columbia, SC

Nandina is Toxic to Birds and Other Animals



Nandina -
Photo by Deborah Roy

Do you recognize this plant? It is known as Nandina, Sacred Bamboo, or Heavenly Bamboo. It is located in all of the lower 48 states and it commonly planted in yards, parks, and around businesses. Nandina is an invasive, non-native plant, and its berries, as well as the leaves, are laden with cyanide and other alkaloids that produce highly toxic hydrogen cyanide which is extremely poisonous to all animals. Cyanide poisoning and death can occur rapidly, usually within minutes to an hour.

To protect our wildlife and our pets, please consider removing these plants from your landscape and planting native plants such as Spicebush, Winterberry, Rabbiteye Blueberry, or Persimmon. If this is not a possibility, please cut off the berry branches and dispose of properly.

The link below is for a research article that was done after dozens of Cedar Waxwings were found dead. The cause of death was found to be caused from the ingestion of Nandina berries.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3005831/>



Opportunities for Young Birders

Carolina Bird Club offers scholarships for birders 19 and under living in the Carolinas, who are members of the Carolina Young Birders Club.

Scholarships provide assistance in attending bird-related events, such as camps, workshop, training programs or CBC seasonal meetings.

For more information, visit www.carolinabirdclub.org

Trip Recap

CBC field trip to the Outer Banks of NC - December 14-15, 2019

by Steve Shultz

A witches' coven of Carolina Bird Club members pounded sand, cruised gravel roads, scrambled over rocks, and bushwhacked through Salt-meadow Cordgrass on a very good (some may successfully argue "great") "bonus trip" this past weekend to the Outer Banks and associated inland Refuge areas of Eastern NC. Bonus trips are one of the occasional non-seasonal meetings sponsored by the club.



Oregon Inlet -
Photo by Richard Hayes

Although the weather prognosticators suggested a quite damp and challenging Saturday, we endured just one 45-minute band of rain, time well-spent under cover of the Pea Island Visitor Center porch (American Bittern and White-winged Scoter highlights).



Photo by Richard Hayes

We started the morning at a foggy Oregon Inlet. Dolphins frolicked in the mist, appearing as grey ghosts just yards from the rocks, as we made our way to the seaward point. By this time the sun popped out, providing a photographers' dream of sun, mist, sea, and dunes. Back at the parking lot, Ryan Justice spotted the Ash-throated Flycatcher that had been MIA since its original sighting the prior weekend, providing great looks for all.



Ash-throated Flycatcher -
Photo by Phil Fowler

North Pond provided nice encounters with the standard ducks, swans, avocets, and godwits, along with Peregrine Falcon and another White-winged Scoter, this one actually in the pond. Kent Fiala and Ryan Justice found a pair of Common Goldeneye at the NE corner of the pond, and Karen Hogan spotted another pair later in a different spot.



Photo by Richard Hayes

Our bird count for the day was in the 80-species range when we headed over to Alligator River NWR to look for the recently reported Rough-legged Hawk. While the bird remained elusive, we enjoyed bobcat, bear (in the same view at the same time!) a covey of Bobwhite and displaying woodcock.

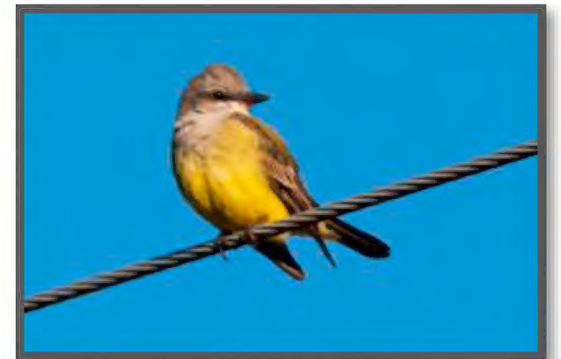
Sunday dawned bright, clear, and surprisingly still. All heard Virginia Rail calling, and several saw the slinky little birds at Bodie Island before we headed south and hiked out to the old inlet at Split Pea for maritime sparrows. Here we enjoyed the "Marsh Grand Slam" of Nelson's, Saltmarsh, and Seaside Sparrows along with Marsh and Sedge Wrens.



American Oystercatchers -
Photo by Phil Fowler

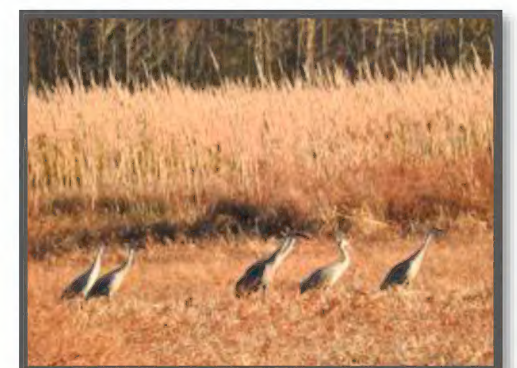
Now over 100 species for the weekend, and with few likely targets remaining along the immediate shore, we repaired inland to Alligator for another try at the Rough-legged Hawk. This time we found it, but only a few attendees got decent looks as the bird apparently successful made a kill, and then proceeded to stay out of sight. Another, or maybe the same, bear made an appearance, as well as a lone turkey.

Heading west, we navigated the often tricky roads to Pungo. Along the way, rocking along to the all-80s channel, I noticed a bird on the wire that looked, well, it looked like a Western Kingbird. It's hard to stop a train of six cars, so I pinged Ryan Justice, who was at the back of the line. He thought the same thing, and they volunteered to go back and check. Sure enough, Western Kingbird! So we all made the 3-point turns for a look-see.



Western Kingbird -
Photo by Phil Fowler

The goal of this expedition was to try and find Sandhill Cranes at Pungo. And we arrived to the sight of six loafing a hundred yards away. But the sight and sound of hundreds and hundreds of Tundra Swans flying over or standing in the shallow water was just as impressive.



Sandhill Cranes -
Photo by Richard Hayes



Tundra Swan -
Photo by Phil Fowler

We ended the trip with 122 species, bear, bobcat, otter, Inshore Bottle-nosed Dolphin, deer, and a great group dinner at Blue Water Grille.

While this trip is in the record books, I hope to see you on a CBC trip in the future!

CBC COSTA RICA BONUS TRIP APRIL 11-21, 2020



JOIN CAROLINA BIRD CLUB AND LIFE BIRD TOURS FOR 10 DAYS OF BIRDING SOME OF COSTA RICA'S BEST HOT SPOTS INCLUDING LA SELVA, SAVEGRE VALLEY AND CARARA NATIONAL PARK. THIS WILL BE ANOTHER FANTASTIC COSTA RICA ADVENTURE WITH CBC MEMBER SHERRY LANE OF LIFE BIRD TOURS, LLC AND EXCELLENT LOCAL BIRD GUIDE STEVEN EASLEY WHO HAVE LED 5 PRIOR CBC BONUS TRIPS FOR THE CAROLINA BIRD CLUB TO COSTA RICA. WE EXPECT TO SEE APPROXIMATELY 300 SPECIES OF BIRDS INCLUDING MANY HUMMINGBIRDS, PARROTS, TROGONS, TOUCANS, MOTMOTS, AND OF COURSE THE STUNNING RESPLENDENT QUETZAL!



IF YOU WANT TO JOIN US ON THIS BONUS TRIP, PLEASE CONTACT SHERRY LANE BY EMAIL.

Slane360@yahoo.com

Sign up is on a first come first serve basis and you must be a member of Carolina Bird Club.

How I Got Into Birding

By Jill Midgett



Jill Midgett

I guess I am a birder because my Father fed backyard birds when I was a child. We had no feeders and there was no pattern or plan to it. He worked for a grocery store and brought home bags of seed which had broken in the store. The seed was broadcast daily on a sandy patch in our backyard until the bag was empty. Blue Jays, Northern Cardinals, doves, sparrows, and the occasional Northern Mockingbird joined in. It would be decades before I learned about field guides, saw them, and learned their complete names.

My Father appreciated plants, wildlife, the weather and nature. At least once a year a male Cardinal would knock itself “out” on our 1950’s “picture” window. He rescued these birds and always showed them to me before he let them go. I vividly remember him saying softly “son of bitch” when they bit down on that soft patch between the thumb and forefinger. Many years later I experienced that same thing on one thrilling day helping Will Post retrieve birds at his banding station on James Island. Blue Grosbeaks bit down on me as they had on my father. It took me a very long time to realize my Daddy was a keen observer and admirer of nature.

He and I were glued to our B&W TV every Sunday watching Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom and the occasional wildlife video on Walt Disney’s Wonderful World of Color. We’re talking Pre-PBS BBC Nature and David Attenborough folks!

Growing up in West Palm Beach, Florida in the 60’s, we spent many weekend afternoons at the beach. Traveling to and from the still unspoiled barrier islands, I learned a few more birds – Sea Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Sea Gulls and oh yes, the Mosquito Hawk - insert smiley face emoji here. But I spent as much time as possible with a mask and snorkel, underwater observing. This made me a shell collector and I finally asked for and got what was a field guide. My 6th grade teacher saw the observer in me and did something which now stuns me. He found a microscope, brought in his college biology text, gave me jar of “pond scum” and assigned me to draw what I saw on the slides he taught me to prepare. I’d give anything to have that little notebook today.



Great Blue Heron Family - Photo by Jill Midgett



Red-eyed Vireo -
Photo by Jill Midgett

I went on to study botany and microbiology. Believe it or not there is much beauty in what is seen under a microscope and in a petri dish. My interest in the observation of details in nature was leading me to my career of diagnostic microbiology and infection control. But birds were out there for me. One Saturday on a botany class field trip near Gainesville, FL, my eyes were opened to what would become an enduring source of joy in my life. Our professor, wearing his pith helmet and khaki field gear (mind you this was pre L.L. Bean and Gortex), pointed to the sky and quietly said “Swallow Tailed Kite.” I saw a black and white “X” for a moment. I asked him to repeat what he said and he grinned as he told me. Yes, I still remember that moment. And I knew then that I needed to know more. I nearly lost my shoes in a swamp that day and ripped my jeans climbing through a barbed wire fence. It didn’t stop me from going to the campus bookstore and finding my first field guide. The Audubon paperback with a vinyl cover. That was my first mistake. I was not a birder yet. And it was ok because birding was not in my vocabulary.

My second mistake was never going anywhere to find birds. I didn’t know that was something that anyone would do. I kept the guide in my house and when I had another “what is that?!” moment, I looked it up. My life changed a few years after college when I moved to Chapel Hill, NC in Fall of ’82. Eastern Towhees appeared on time every evening to throw backyard leaves in the air; Brown Creepers went up and White Breasted Nuthatches went down the pine outside my living room window. Dozens of Cedar Waxwings and American Robins descended on cedar trees and I learned to hear the waxwings before I saw them. Now I **wanted** to get better at this. Two years in a row a Blue Grosbeak appeared in a blooming Dogwood on my birthday. Now I **really** wanted to get better at this. I asked my sister for binoculars for Christmas. I was on my way.

(continued on page 6)

Want to share your own “How I Got Into Birding” story?
Please send your completed story to newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org.

How I Got Into Birding (continued from page 5)



Photo by Jill Midgett

A coworker was talking about birds she had seen in Wilmington on a winter weekend. I thought this woman is crazy or maybe I could be too. We became friends and one day she said "You know you can go to parks and places all over NC and see a bunch of birds....." I asked her to take me. I learned a lot from her and then in year or so she said, "Do you know what migration is?," Uh....I thought about wildebeest from some nature program.....nope. She explained it briefly and I was so clueless but wanted to learn more. She took to me to Masons' Farm in Chapel Hill. In minutes, she conjured up Black and White and Black-throated Blue and Green Warblers. Now I earned the right to look at the Fall Confusing Warblers section of the Peterson's field guide I finally purchased. I was officially intimidated and knew this would be a lifelong hobby.

I created a life list in that paperback Petersons. I carried my bins on every business trip and vacation I took around the US and abroad. My life list grew. Sometime in the late '90's, that friend told me about the Carolina Birds List serve, and this led us to the Carolina Bird Club! I know we went to Elkin, and I think it was in 1998. On a trip to the Outer Banks, I saw my first bird through a spotting scope, thanks to Kent Fiala for a perfect male American Kestrel in the ARNWR. By then, I was confident in describing myself as a *bird-watcher*. And of course, I wanted a spotting scope. My friend and I bought new field guides for each other's birthdays and Christmas for years. The one who dies with the most field guides wins.

I moved to Charleston, SC in 2000 and I was surrounded by places to see incredible birds. I was so motivated by the variety here, that I sucked up my courage and attended a fall workshop in Cape May with Pete Dunne, Pat and Clay Sutton and other birding glitterati whose names I forget. I bought used Zeiss 10X42 bins from friends I met there. I spent the equivalent of a mortgage payment for them. A couple years later I took Ornithology with Dennis Forsythe in his last class at The Citadel in 2002, I think. It was incredible. Who knew wrens sounded like my Grandmother's Singer Sewing Machine. I learned so very much. Thank you, Dennis. I think by then, birding was a verb, but it didn't matter because after that, I WAS A BIRDER. My career took to me to Maryland in 2004 and Connecticut in 2009. In New England my bird world exploded. I attended my 1st Christmas Bird Count slogging through 6 inches of wet snow on the grounds of a nuclear power plant. I still remember showing my driver's license to a guard who had what looked like an AK-47 strapped to his chest. The birds were few, but wow, these people were serious birders and that day I was one of them. We birded spring, fall and winter weekends for several years. I saw Connecticut Warblers in Connecticut and Snowy Owls in Massachusetts so close to me I didn't need bins. My first Snowy made me cry. Our leader did a double take and asked me if I was ok. Yes, I was so much more than OK, I was thanking God (Not Harry Potter). During my last year in New England, my Zeiss bins and precious Peterson guide with my life list were stolen from my car in a hospital parking lot. I was so sad and angry. It took me a year to buy new bins. Crazy, right? I'd give them away right now, to have that guide back.

I've birded in other states and countries and added to my toolbox and passport. I finally got a scope, thanks to Derb Carter. And thanks to the CBC I was able to travel with him and others to Cuba. I've since been twice to Costa Rica with Sherry Lane and other CBC birders. I hope to bird in Africa later this year. It will bring back memories of Marlin Perkins and Jim Fowler because yes, we will be looking also for 4-legged non-feathered species! I am now determined to bird internationally each year. I bird because it takes me to a place of peace and excitement sometimes at the same time. It has introduced me to so very many kind, witty, helpful, and fun people. And halleluiah they are getting younger! It has taken me to a pasture where Fidel Castro's comrades hid in the woods not long after I was born. And each morning it takes me to a window to laugh at 3 pairs of Bluebirds fighting over their turn at the mealworms and taking hits from the Boss Man Mockingbird. If I am watching the usual suspects in my back yard, pulling off the road to check for chick heads in the Osprey nest I pass every day, or giving bird guides to people who catch my fever. I am so happy to be a birder. I've still got so much to learn, and so many more birds to see. That's the best thing about this, I never get bored. I continually learn and I still appreciate a chickadee as much as I do a rarity in another country. Once you decide you are a birder, you are one for life. You don't have to add to your list or even keep one. Just watch and enjoy every feathered miracle you see. They're all over our planet. They're more specialized than any other animal and oh yeah, they FLY!

PRINCETON
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Spring 2020 Natural History & Ornithology Highlights

For the entire list, please visit the link below:
<https://press.princeton.edu/catalogs/birds-natural-history>

Spread the Word About Your Blrds!

Finding and Reporting Rare and Unusual Blrds

By Craig Watson

If you have ever wondered how best to report rare and unusual birds and learn where to find them, here is a list of tools and venues available to you in the field or at home to spread the word about your great bird discoveries. Although some of these tools presented here are primarily for use in the Carolinas, some can be used anywhere in the world to report and discover rare and unusual birds.

When I first began birding, personal computers and cellular telephone technology were not available, so rare birds could not be posted to an email listserv until you got home, and you could not text or call someone from a cell phone to notify the birding community. Back then, a rotary phone, pay phone, and an old-fashioned “phone tree” were used to spread the word. However, with today’s technology, reports can be made in real time and others can enjoy your discovery immediately! Here are some of the better ways to share birding information using modern technology, and listed in order of ease of use and most effective from the field.

GroupMe App – North and South Carolina Rare Bird Alert –  this alert is by far the easiest to use and spread the word on your birds(s). With a quick text message on the app under each alert, the alert will go out to all members of the Group. To join the rare bird alert, click on the links below and follow the instructions. You can use this app directly from the field and let your fellow birders know of your discovery and the location. Each Group is monitored so please only share pertinent bird sightings and locations. This app can also be used on your home computer.

North Carolina - **CBC NC Rare Bird Alert** or https://web.groupme.com/join_group/44042177/tdYiPA
South Carolina - **CBC SC Rare Bird Alert** or https://web.groupme.com/join_group/52879351/5PT34NjX

Carolina Birds Listserv – this listserv has been active for many years and is a quick way to get your word out via email. This requires that you be on a device that handles your email. This can also be done from the field and requires that there be cellular availability to send the email. It also requires a bit more typing than using the GroupMe app and when used in conjunction with the GroupMe app can be a very efficient and quick way of spreading the word. To join the Carolina Birds listserv, follow the instructions at this link: **Carolina Birds listserv** <https://lists.duke.edu/sympa/info/carolinabirds>

eBird – this worldwide database for bird observations has  multiple tools for reporting and finding out about rare and unusual birds, and also allows you to search for any species you have an interest in. First of all, the best way to use the database is to join the worldwide database. This is free and easily done by joining at: **Create eBird Account** or eBird.org. Within eBird, any rare

bird that you report through the Mobile eBird app or online at eBird will be distributed through any number of rare eBird alerts. This reporting is dependent on when the report is submitted and the lag in time between submission and distribution of the processed report. This can take hours or days depending on when the report is submitted. The best way to use eBird for reporting rare birds is to use the eBird mobile app, document the rare bird in the field, and submit the report right away. To utilize the eBird rare bird reporting system, you should go to Manage My Alerts on your eBird home page and subscribe to any county, state, region, or country from where you want to receive rare bird alerts. If you want alerts sooner than later on eBird, set your alerts to *hourly*, otherwise you will receive alerts a day later.

On the Carolina Bird Club website, eBird rarities are updated frequently for North and South Carolina on another page that Kent has designed, and this is easily accessed by any device and is a very quick reference to what is being seen throughout your birding day in the Carolinas (again, dependent on the eBird report being submitted in a timely manner): <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/sightings/>

Recently, Kent Fiala developed a “widget” for use on your mobile device that directly links you to these eBird alerts for anywhere in the country or world. It can be an icon on your mobile device and when opened, it shows you what rare eBird reports are within a defined distance from your current location. As an example, I was recently in Michigan driving home and opened the widget/app, and saw that there was a Pacific Loon about 30 miles from my current location and I was able to change course and drive over to find the bird at the location the bird had just been reported! Here is a link to that great widget, and thank you Kent! **Nearby Notable eBird Reports** or <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/sightings/nearby.html>

Facebook – there are many Facebook pages in which you  can post your rare bird photos, eBird checklists, and other information important to the birding community. This is most often done after your birding day is done or you have a break in your birding day, as it requires processing photos and uploading them to a device where you can open and easily create a Facebook post. Here are some of the most popular and widely used Facebook sites for posting rare bird alerts:

-Carolina Rare Birds – This page widely used for reporting rare birds in the Carolinas and requires approval by the moderators before the post appears, and approval is generally very quick.

-Carolina Birders – used by many birders and posts are available immediately (continued on page 8)

Spread the Word About Your Birds!
Finding and Reporting Rare and Unusual Birds (continued from page 7)

-Carolina Birders Photo Sharing Group – This page is often used by photographers and the birding community has learned to follow this page to check for rare birds.

-ABA Rare Bird Alert – This page is for ABA rarities and you can post, yet approval is required by the moderators.

-What's This Bird? – This page has become one of the most popular by birders, photographers, and by Facebook users simply wanting to identify birds. Many people like this site as unknown rare birds often show up here without the user knowing all of the available networks to report rare birds. A great example of this is the recent report of the Shiny Cowbird in Charleston, SC. This bird appeared at a feeder and the observer knew it was “different”, reported it on this FB page, and many birders were able to view the bird at her home.

Ok, this is a LOT of information, but use of these tools becomes easy and second nature after some practice. Here is an example of how I would use these tools. Let's say that I observe a Eurasian Wigeon at Pitt St. Causeway in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. I carefully document the field marks for my eBird report and take a photograph of the bird in the water. I immediately open the SC Rare Bird Alert on the GroupMe app and type in Eurasian Wigeon at Pitt St. Causeway, Mount Pleasant, SC being observed now near the oyster restoration site, hit send, and all of the SC Rare Bird Alert subscribers receive the message immediately. I can then open up my email on my phone and type a short

message to the Carolina Birds listserv and send out, and all those subscribing to the listserv will receive this on email as soon as it is sent out. When I'm through birding, I submit my eBird checklist, and in an hour or so, anyone subscribing to eBird alerts can check their various eBird alerts. And if I choose to, I can post something to Facebook pages later. Woohoo! The WORD is out on your discovery!

Using one of these tools or a combination of these tools will ensure that information is disseminated quickly to the birding community. I encourage you to try out these various tools, and if you do not want to use the tools, there is still the telephone method! Remember, timing is important and it is best to report the bird as soon as possible through one of these venues. The GroupMe app alert and the listserv are the quickest. In many cases, birds are reported the following day or longer, and the bird has moved on, so I encourage you to act quick and get the word out!

Finally, locations of rare and unusual birds should not be reported for eBird sensitive species and for those species located on private lands (unless public access and permission is granted). Many of these species need protection from any level of disturbance and trespassing to view birds is never an acceptable behavior. Additionally, there are other circumstances in which rare birds should not be reported, so please consider your circumstances before reporting. Here is a link to the eBird sensitive species list: **eBird Sensitive Species List**. (<https://support.ebird.org/en/support/solutions/articles/48000803210-sensitive-species-in-ebird>)

The Next Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)
is February 14-17, 2020

What is GBBC? Bird watchers of all ages count birds to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are.

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time. Now, more than 160,000 people of all ages and walks of life worldwide join the four-day count each February.

For at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, February 14-17, 2020, simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see. You can count from any location, anywhere in the world, for as long as you wish!

How Do I Record My Counts? Go to Birdcount.org and click on Submit Observations. If you do not have an account, you will need to create one prior to submitting observations. That's it! Happy Birding!

**How many
birds can
you find?**

**23rd Annual Great
Backyard Bird Count**

February 14-17, 2020

birdcount.org



White-breasted Nuthatch. Photo: Ulf Kirchdorfer/Great Backyard Bird Count

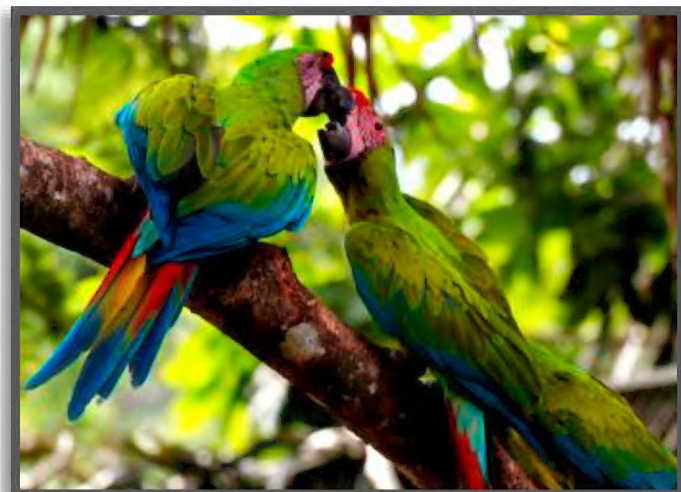
Trip Report

Costa Rica Caribbean to Cloud Forest Tour for Carolina Bird Club

December 4-15, 2019

by Amanda & Paul Laurent

Epic Nature Tours guides, Paul and Amanda Laurent, led an amazing 12 day birding tour to Costa Rica with the Carolina Bird Club this past December 4-15, 2019. It was a small group of just three guests and two trip leaders. We saw a total of 259



Great Green Macaws -
Photo Courtesy of Epic Nature Tours

species of birds. Some species highlights include 2 Sunbittern, dozens of Great Green Macaws, and 5 Resplendent Quetzals. We saw a total of 31 endemics including Spangle-cheeked Tanagers, Golden-browed Chlorophonias, and Volcano Juncos. While birds were our primary focus, we of course saw many mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. Highlights include the Talamancan Palm Pit Viper, which is an endemic snake only found in the Cloud Forest of Costa Rica. We also saw three species of poison frogs: Black and Green Poison Frog, Lovely Poison Frog, and Strawberry Poison Frog. Of course, a proper trip to Costa Rica is not complete without seeing the Hoffman's Two-toed Sloths, Three-toed Sloths, Capuchin Monkeys, Mantled Howler Monkeys, and Spider Monkeys. An amazing variety of wild-



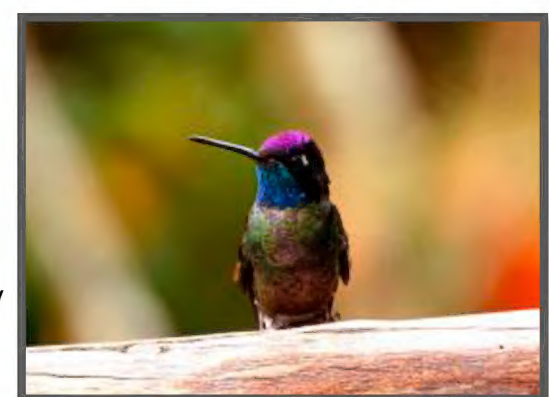
Resplendent Quetzal -
Photo Courtesy of Epic Nature Tours

life, adventurous and enthusiastic participants, and knowledgeable trip leaders made this a successful and fun birding trip to Costa Rica!

Our adventure began in San Jose, where we picked up our group at the airport and saw our first bird of the trip - the rare and elusive... house sparrow! After that exciting find, we loaded everyone's bags into our two SUVs for a short drive to a nearby hotel for the night. While still in the city, we were still able to see a range of birds, including Rufus-naped Wren, Hoffman's Woodpecker, and Yellow-headed Caracara. Many birds are beginning to expand their range from the Pacific Coast into the Central Valley, so we were able to see quite a few birds that we would be out of range for the rest of our trip.

The next morning we got up early and quickly put the big city in our rearview mirror as we drove east towards the Caribbean fishing village of Manzanillo. The drive to the Caribbean was scenic, taking us through lush mountain landscapes and along-side tropical coastlines where we were able to see Montezuma Oropendolas, Roadside Hawks, and our first sloth of the trip. The cloudy skies turned to a light (and occasionally not so light) rain, but we did not let that dampen our spirits! We were slightly delayed by a pair of Slaty-tailed Trogons and a family of Collared Aracaris along the road. We arrived at our lodge in the Caribbean in time for a walk down a private trail to the beach where we found a Collared Plover in a small flock of other shorebird.

The next morning we understood the true meaning of the term 'rain forest' as we spent the morning listening to the sounds of the rain dance on the tin roof of the covered porch of our house. We didn't mind the rain since it gave us the pleasure of watching Long-billed Hermits and other hummingbirds dodge raindrops as they buzzed from flower to flower right in front of us. Before long, the rain lightened and we were able to meet up with our incredible local guide Abel to enjoy a bird walk along the edge of town before exploring jungle trails of the Gandoca-Manzanillo Wildlife Refuge. Highlights included Crested Caracaras, Pale-vented Pigeons, Mealy Parrots, Masked Tityras, and a Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher.



Talamanca Hummingbird -
Photo Courtesy of Epic Nature Tours

As we explored deeper into the jungle we were able to find a gorgeous Yellow Eyelash Pit Viper that we admired from a distance. We also found Strawberry Poison Frogs and Lovely Poison Frogs on this hike.

The next morning we were up early to look for tanagers and songbirds in the gardens north of town before we met up with our local guide Abel to kayak up the Punta Uva River. On our previous trip we saw two Sunbitterns up this river, so we hoped they might still be hanging out in the same area. The paddle up river took us past Long-nosed Bats under a small bridge, a seven foot long Spectacled Caiman on the bank, a small flock of Dusky-faced Tanagers, several Bay Wrens, and much more. We reached the area known to have Sunbitterns, but none were to be found. Several participants of our group climbed up the bank to check some of the small tributary creeks, but still no sign of the elusive birds could be found. We paddled back thinking we had missed our best chance at finding a Sunbittern. As we came around the next bend, we found ourselves face to face with not one, but two Sunbitterns looking at us from a fallen log on the edge of the river! The stunning birds were quite cooperative, and stayed just in front of us for close to twenty minutes as we slowly drifted back down the river.

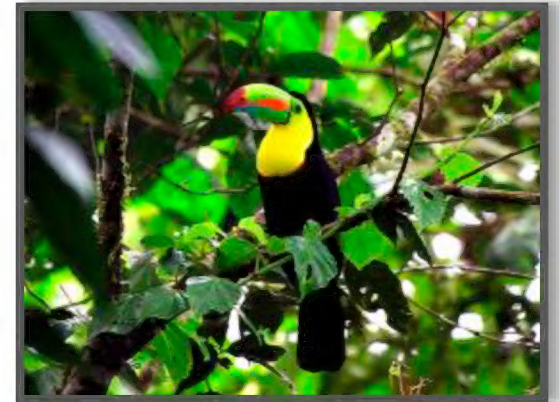
(continued on page 10)

Trip Report

Costa Rica Caribbean to Cloud Forest Tour for Carolina Bird Club (*continued from page 9*)

Each time we got too close they spread their wings and flew just down the bank, showing their beautiful sunburst wing patterns each time. Quite pleased with ourselves, we finished our paddle and returned to the lodge to dry off a bit.

After lunch we drove up an incredibly steep hill to visit the ARA Project. ARA is a nonprofit organization doing incredible work reintroducing the Great Green Macaw to the Caribbean lowlands. During our visit at ARA, we were able to learn about the conservation work surrounding these amazing birds, and watch several dozen wild macaws fly above our heads. While the macaws took front and center on the stage, we also had fantastic views of Keel-billed and Yellow-throated Toucans.



Keel-billed Toucan -
Photo Courtesy of Epic Nature Tours

The next morning we enjoyed an amazing breakfast at a local restaurant called Bread & Chocolate (it is very well named). Next we headed north to visit Cahuita National Park. The park covers the entirety of a peninsula sticking out into the Caribbean Sea consisting of both Primary and Secondary Rainforest habitats. The trail begins with a boardwalk through a flooded rainforest that takes you out to the beach. The next stretch continues along the beach, crosses a small river, and eventually cuts back into the jungle. It is a remarkable series of habitats with an incredible variety of birds. We spotted American Pygmy Kingfishers, Shining Honeycreepers, Band-tailed Barbthroats, Black-crowned Antshrikes, Bay Wrens, White-collared Manakins and many others. We also got closeup views of White-faced Monkeys and North American Racoons, as well as Central American Ameivas (a medium sized lizard), Emerald Basilisks (much bigger lizards), and an Olive Keelback (a long, skinny snake).

The next morning we bid farewell to the Caribbean and traveled inland to the tiny little village of Bambu. We made a quick stop on the side of the road for a pair of long-tailed tyrants on our way to Bambu. Once we reached Bambu we climbed aboard a dugout canoe with an outboard engine in the back for a ride down the Sixola River and then up the Yorkin River to the indigenous Bribri community of Yorkin. The village is situated on the border of Costa Rica and Panama with the Yorkin and Sixola rivers being natural borders of the two countries.

Along the way we saw Amazon Kingfishers, Ringed Kingfishers, Squirrel Cuckoo, and more. The Bribri people in Yorkin have an organic cacao farm where they make farm to bar chocolate. During our visit we were able to learn the process of making chocolate from raw fruit to the finished product; 100% dark chocolate. We were able to participate in roasting cacao beans, removing the outer shells, grinding the beans, and then enjoying the purest chocolate possible atop fresh organic bananas served on a banana leaf! The homemade chocolate was made even sweeter by the Snowy Cotinga, Short-tailed Night-hawks, Yellow-crowned Euphonia, Fasciated Antshrikes, White-necked Jacobin, Plain-colored Tanager, and much more! We spent the night in a traditional, open-air round house and fell asleep to the sounds of the jungle all around us.

We awoke the next morning to the sound of roosters and hens who were busy laying the eggs for our breakfast. After a few hours of birdwatching we were back in the canoe for an exciting ride down the river back to Bambu. Along the way we saw a Gray Hawk, lots of kingfishers, and Mangrove Swallows. Once back on land we bid farewell to our guide Abel and drove north into the hills of Turrialba. We stopped for lunch at a little restaurant WAY off the main road with some great birdfeeders and a stunning view of Lake Angostura. We enjoyed a delicious home cooked meal while watching White-tipped Doves, Chestnut-headed and Montezuma Oropendolas, and Brown Jays. After lunch we arrived at Guayabo Lodge in time for a quick walk around the gardens before dinner.

We began the next morning with a cup of gourmet coffee and a walk around the gardens where we saw a Red-headed Barbet, Black Phoebes, Common Chlorospingus, Barred Antshrike, Slate-throated Redstarts, and more Baltimore Orioles in one day than I have seen in my whole life in the US. We came back for a delicious breakfast and then visited the Guayabo National Monument, the oldest pre-columbian ruins in Costa Rica. These ancient ruins are hidden deep in the jungle, and the clearings made by archeologists, create a perfect place to go birdwatching as well as to learn about the history of the area. We watched a Golden-olive Woodpecker working on her nest, chased a pair of Black-throated Wrens through dense vegetation for at least ten minutes, and at the end, came into one of the best mixed flocks of birds I have ever experienced! In the span of a few minutes we saw, Streak-headed Woodcreepers, Buff-throated Foliage-gleaners, Mistletoe Tyrannulet, Olive-striped Flycatchers, Slaty-capped Flycatchers, Scale-crested Pygmy-tyrant, Rufous-winged Tanager, Bay-headed Tanager, Red-throated Ant-tanagers, and more! Upon our return to the lodge we had a well-earned lunch followed by a



Laughing Falcon -
Photo Courtesy of Epic Nature Tours

relaxing walk around the gardens. We then ventured down one of the lodges nature preserve trails leading to Aquiares River and a beautiful waterfall. On the way back up we were watching a flock of Chlorospingus in the bushes. We turned around to see what else may nearby and noticed there was a Laughing Falcon perched in the open in a dead tree less than 20 yards away! It was a great way to end the day.

(*continued on page 11*)

Trip Report

Costa Rica Caribbean to Cloud Forest Tour for Carolina Bird Club (*continued from page 10*)

The following morning we headed up a very steep and mostly unpaved road to visit the Irazu Volcano. It was the most adventurous drive of the whole trip, and was highlighted by a Sooty Thrush and a Coyote that ran across the road in front of us. Sadly the entire volcano was clouded in so thickly we could not see twenty feet in front of us, so we had to abort our visit to the top. We decided to continue heading south to our next stop, the little town of San Gerardo de Dota, nestled in the Savegre Valley. After winding along the PanAm highway, we turned onto an incredibly steep little road down to the Savegre Valley.

After a quick stop to observe a beautiful native Red-tailed Hawk, which look very different from the ones here locally, and another stop for Spot-crowned Woodcreepers and Collared Redstarts, we arrived at Savegre Hotel. This is a stunning eco-lodge nestled deep in the valley with gardens and orchards full of birds in all directions. The most exciting non-bird sighting of the trip happened that night on the walk back from dinner. We found a stunning Talamancan Palm Pit Viper crossing the sidewalk in front of us! This is an incredibly rare snake that few people ever have the chance to see. It was first discovered in 2016 and is only found in the high mountains of southern Costa Rica! After some pictures, we continued on and let the snake go on its way.

The next morning we woke up really early to meet our guide, Marino, to go to look for the Resplendent Quetzal. We found 4 of them, along with Black Guans, Black-cheeked Warblers, Flame-throated Warblers, Ruddy Treerunner, Golden-browed Chlorophonias, Sulphur-winged Parakeets, Ochraceous Wrens, Gray-breasted Wood-Wrens, Flame-colored Tanagers, Townsend's Warblers, Sooty-caped Chlorospingus, Long-tailed Silky-flycatchers, the list goes on... There was a minor incident involving two of our party, a donkey, and a rather upset horse, but other than that it was an incredible bird walk.

For lunch we went to Miriam's Quetzals - the most famous restaurant in the Valley with a renowned birdfeeder off the back deck. We feasted on possibly the best trout on Earth



Flame-colored Tanager –
Photo Courtesy of Epic Nature Tours



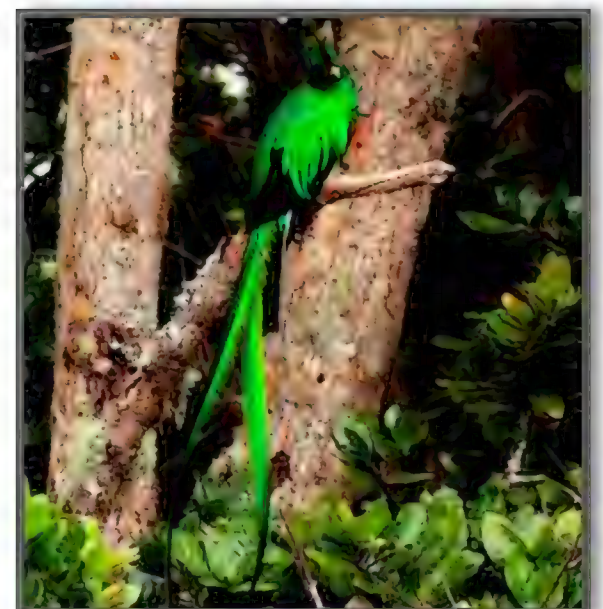
Acorn Woodpecker – Photo Courtesy
of Epic Nature Tours

while watching Emerald Toucanets, Large-footed Finches, Sooty Thrush, Flame-colored Tanagers, White-throated Mountain-gems, Talamanca Hummingbirds, Scintillant Hummingbirds, Lesser Violetears, Acorn Woodpeckers, Yellow-thighed Finches, and more. While some thought the day could not get any better, our next stop was the Batsu Gardens - a beautiful garden built around an apple orchard with a dozen hummingbird feeders and a fruit feeder for tanagers. We saw dozens of hummingbirds, and added Steely-vented Hummingbird to our list, along with White-naped Brush-finch, Chestnut-capped Brush-finch, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Tufted Flycatcher, Silver-throated Tanagers, Volcano Hummingbird, Stripe-tailed Hummingbird, and many others.

The next morning we enjoyed a delicious breakfast, and then got really high! The mountain at the top of the Savegre Valley is called Cerro de la Muerte or "Hill of Death," and is the third highest peak in Costa Rica. The top of the mountain is called the Paramo, and it is high above the timberline and home to birds found nowhere else on earth. As we drove up the steep dirt road toward the peak some of our group thought it would be fun to walk the road instead. The

wiser members of the group continued to drive instead. After an effortless drive up for some...and a strenuous but breathtakingly beautiful hike for others...we reached the summit. There, we found Timberline Wrens, Slaty Flowerpiercers, Peg-billed Finches, Volcano Juncos and more. We stopped at a roadside restaurant for coffee and to check out their birdfeeders. We learned that the Fiery-throated Hummingbirds were nesting at that time of year further down the mountain and were sadly not visible. For lunch we went back to Miriam's Quetzals for another round of trout and some more time watching the Emerald Toucanets and Acorn Woodpeckers at her feeder. As we were about ready to leave, a stunning male Resplendent Quetzal swooped in and landed in a tree not far from the deck. We were unregrettably delayed for some time. Eventually some of our group decided to drive a short ways down the valley to check out an indigenous crafts store for some souvenir shopping, and the rest spent a bit longer birdwatching at Miriams. Once we were all reunited we made one more quick stop on the way back to our lodge where we found Spangle-cheeked Tanagers in a bush just off the road. Some late afternoon wandering around the lodge lead us to a Torrent Tyrannulet at the end of the day.

Our last day began with a wild goose chase, or in this case, a wild Rufous-collared Sparrow chase through the hotel lobby. Once the bird was successfully relocated, we all piled into the SUV and began our drive to San Jose to catch our flights home.



Resplendent Quetzal –
Photo Courtesy of Epic Nature Tours



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Upcoming CBC Meetings

Spring - Black Mountain, NC - April 30 - May 3, 2020

Winter - Outer Banks, NC - January 14 - 17, 2021

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**Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of
December, February, April, June, August, and October.**

www.carolinabirdclub.org

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Membership dues include access to publications: the **CBC Newsletter** and **The Chat**, which is only available on line. Tax deductible as allowable by law.

Cost for CBC bird checklists, including postage: 10@\$5.45, 25@\$13.40, 50@\$27.00, and 100@\$54.00.

Join the CBC at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/dues/>. Enter change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile/>. Order checklists from: CBC Headquarters Secretary, 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst, NC 28374.
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CBC Newsletter

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Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

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April 2020

Number 2



Spring in the Mountains: Black Mountain, NC

April 30 through May 3, 2020

by Marilyn Westphal & Karyl Gabriel, Meeting Planners

Who can resist a spring weekend in the Blue Ridge Mountains with the myriads of neo-tropical migrants, the wildflowers, the butterflies, the beauty of those mountain ridges overlooking the fresh greening of the slopes and valleys in springtime? The Blue Ridge Parkway is such a popular trip selection that this year there will be opportunities for both full-day and half-day trips both north and south of Asheville along the Parkway. These trips should provide everyone the opportunity to see some of those coveted spring migrants like Canada, Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Chestnut-sided, Blackburnian, Cerulean, and Worm-eating Warblers, as well as Blue-headed, Red-eyed, and Yellow-throated Vireos, Wood and Hermit Thrushes, Least Flycatchers, Broad-winged Hawks, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins, and possibly Red Crossbills. In addition to these breeding species, other birds passing through the mountains and heading farther north such as Magnolia, Cape May, and possibly Bay-breasted Warblers might also be seen.



Chestnut-sided Warbler.
photo by Marilyn Westphal

Once again there will be all-day trips both days to Max Patch, the best local opportunity to see Golden-winged Warblers as well as many of the other migrants that are also seen along the Parkway. This year there will also be an all-day trip to Green River Cove Road and Lake Adger, a local favorite area for Kentucky, Swainson's, and Prothonotary Warblers as well as a very popular spot for Yellow-throated Vireos, Cliff Swallows, and one of the few Great Blue Heron breeding colonies in the mountain area.



Great Blue Heron Nest,
photo by Deborah Roy

In addition to half-day trips along the Parkway, there will be several trips to local parks where both Baltimore and Orchard Orioles might be seen, as well as some of the local breeding warblers common to lower elevations. Often these parks are also some of the best spots for seeing migrants that just pass through as they head farther north, like Blue-winged, Magnolia, and Palm Warblers.

Our meeting location will be something a little different this year. It will be held at

the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain amid more than a thousand acres of forest with several mountain streams and miles of trails. Even just driving in or out of the property you have a good chance of hearing a variety of warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other migrants, and you may want to spend some of your free time exploring the trails on the property. This is a conference center and not a conventional hotel, so reservations will be made through the Carolina Bird Club. All rooms have two queen beds and include access to Wifi, but none have TV's or refrigerators. Bring a cooler if you need to keep something cold. Ice will be provided on-site.

In this Issue

- CBC Spring 2020 Meeting
- Youth Art Exhibition
- New Members
- Executive Committee Elections
- Spring Field Trip Schedule
- Spring Field Trip Descriptions
- CBC Bonus Trip - Sandhills
- Litchfield Beach Trip Photos
- How I Got Into Birding
- Spring Trip Registration Form

Spring In the Mountains: Black Mountain, NC (continued from page 1)

As this is a YMCA facility, alcoholic beverages must remain out of sight of the public and can only be consumed inside guest rooms and meeting rooms. Total cost for single rooms for three nights including three breakfasts (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) and two dinners (Friday and Saturday evening) will be \$374, and double rooms for three nights including three breakfasts and two dinners will be \$450 (there is no tax as this is a non-profit facility). For those staying only two nights the rate will be \$265.50 single and \$331 double and includes Saturday and Sunday breakfast and Friday and Saturday dinner. There is also pricing for Triple and Quad rooms. Please see the registration form or the website for pricing. NO single night stays are available at the facility, but there are a few hotels in Black Mountain and in East Asheville. Reservations should be made before April 8th. If any rooms are still available at the facility after that date they will continue to accept reservations, so check with CBC first before booking elsewhere. Any cancellations after April 8th will be for emergencies only.

All meals are buffet style and include gluten free and vegetarian choices. For those not staying at the facility there are two meal options available: the total meal package of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday breakfast and Friday and Saturday dinner at a cost of \$77 per person, or dinner only on Saturday evening for \$20.50 per person. No other mix of meal options is available. Please include meal payments with your registration. Those who sign up for all-day trips will have the opportunity to purchase bag lunches from the facility. These orders must be placed at least two weeks before the meeting, and payment will be due upon arrival at the facility. A menu will be sent to those who sign up for all-day trips when you register. For all others there is a grocery store in Black Mountain as well as a few fast food outlets and small restaurants.

Registration, guest rooms, and meeting rooms are all located in the Blue Ridge Center about 0.6 miles from the entrance to the property. The Center is on the downhill side of the parking area (not the tall building on top of the hill.) Thursday evening there will be a fun-filled opportunity to brush up on your skills identifying migratory songbirds with birder extraordinaire and owner of Ventures Birding, Simon Thompson; so, Friday morning you'll be ready to head out with more confidence. On Friday evening, Marilyn Westphal and Mark Simpson will be discussing their research project with breeding Northern Saw-whet Owls. This will include action photos and video from inside and outside active nest boxes as well as data on diet, nest success, banding, and predators caught on camera. Following a short business meeting on Saturday evening, John Carpenter of the Wildlife Diversity Project, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, will introduce plans for the proposed *NC Bird Atlas*. His discussion will focus on the purpose of an atlas, why we need one in North Carolina, and how NC birders can participate to make this project successful. This project requires a lot of interest from local birders to come together, but it is fun and, if you've ever read breeding bird atlases from other states you know that the results are well worth the effort.

Taking Flight

An International Juried Youth Bird Art Exhibition at Mass Audubon

The goal of this exhibition is to create a greater awareness and appreciation for birds while fostering the development of young artists and sharing their work with the public at a professional museum.

The *Taking Flight* contest is open to young artists **age 4 to 18** of all skill levels. The exhibition of winners will be displayed at MABA in the fall and/or winter.

Submissions will be accepted between January 15 and June 15, 2020. Juried art will be exhibited September 2020 - March, 2021.

For more information, please visit the Mass Audubon website at www.massaudubon.org.



Secretary Birds © Noah Chan (age 8)



Opportunities for Young Birders

Carolina Bird Club offers scholarships for birders 19 and under living in the Carolinas, who are members of the Carolina Young Birders Club.

Scholarships provide assistance in attending bird-related events, such as camps, workshop, training programs or CBC seasonal meetings.

For more information, visit www.carolinabirdclub.org



Welcome New CBC Members!

John Torgerson
Apex, NC

John & Amy Taylor
Beaufort, SC

Kyle Hudick
Kill Devil Hills, NC

Jane Settle
Johns Island, SC

Heather Marlowe
Charleston, SC

Bruce & Jon Maria Taylor
Concord, NC

Michael & Susan Clark
Durham, NC

Shelley, Kyle & Scarlett Keenan
Hanahan, SC

Pat Howel
West End, NC

Bernard Carr
Lewisville, NC

Barbara & Don Alexander
Hanahan, SC

Katherine Baucom
Clemson, SC

Mark & Lynda Dominovich
Murrells Inlet, SC

Richard Stuhr
Charleston, SC

Matt Malin
Aiken, SC

Donna Hollenbach
Raleigh, NC

Margaret Holmes
Arden, NC

Leanne & Smythe Richbourg
Durham, NC

Jane Fellows
Durham, NC

Thomas & Stella Wear
Greensboro, NC

Autrey Stephens
Hartsville, SC

Elizabeth Thomas
Charleston, SC

Wendy Addison
Kitty Hawk, NC

Molly Brugh
Charlotte, NC

Neil, Shannon, & Nathan Owens
Greer, SC

Christopher King – New Life Member
Rougemont, NC

Tandy Gosnell
Simpsonville, SC

Susan Strong
Southern Pines, NC

Chelesi White
Elkins, WV

James Burris
Raleigh, NC

Chacy SanFilippo & Janice Wakefield
Winston-Salem, NC

Marian Swinker
Winterville, NC

CBC Spring Executive Committee Elections

We have an urgent need to fill two vacancies for both Eastern and Western NC Members-at-Large for two-year terms on the Executive Committee. Members-at-Large, along with other members of the Executive Committee, guide the CBC by setting strategy and club programs, seeking and responding to members' ideas, and safekeeping the club's resources. In addition, Members-at-Large form the planning committee for Seasonal Meetings. If you are interested in serving your club in either capacity, please contact hq@carolinabirdclub.org.

The annual election for CBC officers will take place at the Spring Seasonal Meeting in Black Mountain, NC. We invite you to participate by reviewing the slate of nominees below and voting at the meeting. We will also take nominations from the floor to hq@carolinabirdclub.org.

The nominees for Executive Committee positions are:

President – Steve Tracy – Gastonia, NC (First one-year term)
Eastern NC Vice President - Colleen Bockhahn – Raleigh, NC (Three-year term)
Western NC Member-at-Large – (First two-year term)
Eastern NC Member-at-Large – (First two-year term)
Treasurer – Paul Dayer – Durham, NC

Incumbents in positions eligible for re-election are listed below. The eligible term for re-election is listed following the incumbents' names:

Secretary – Jill Midgett – Charleston, SC (Third and final one-year term)
SC Member-at-Large – Mac Williams – Hartsville, SC (Second two-year term)

CBC 2020 Spring Meeting

Field Trip Schedule

Meet your trip in the lobby of the Blue Ridge Center 10 minutes before the scheduled start time for each trip (shown below). Distances shown in the trip descriptions are in the locations where the actual birding will begin for each trip. Those not staying at the hotel may choose to meet at the trip start locations, but must notify the trip leaders ahead of time. Most trips have limited pull-off areas, so carpooling will be required.

Friday, April 30	Saturday, May 1
Friday All-day	Saturday All-day
Trip #1: Blue Ridge Parkway North - 6:30 a.m.	Trip #17: Blue Ridge Parkway North - 6:30 a.m.
Trip #2: Curtis Creek/Mt Mitchell, BRP - 6:45 a.m.	Trip #18: Curtis Creek/Mt Mitchell, BRP - 6:45 a.m.
Trip #3: Blue Ridge Parkway South - 6:20 a.m.	Trip #19: Blue Ridge Parkway South - 6:20 a.m.
Trip #4: Max Patch Road - 6:15 a.m.	Trip #20: Max Patch Road - 6:15 a.m.
Trip #5: Green River Cove Rd - 6:30 a.m.	Trip #21: Green River Cove Rd - 6:30 a.m.
Friday Half-day Morning	Saturday Half-day Morning
Trip #6: Chimney Rock Park/Lake Lure - 6:45 a.m.	Trip #22: Chimney Rock Park/Lake Lure - 6:45 a.m.
Trip #7: Charles D. Owen Park - 7:15 a.m.	Trip #23: Charles D. Owen Park - 7:15 a.m.
Trip #8: Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary - 7:00 a.m.	Trip #24: Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary - 7:00 a.m.
Trip #9: Blue Ridge Parkway North - 7:15 a.m.	Trip #25: Blue Ridge Parkway North - 7:15 a.m.
Trip #10: Blue Ridge Parkway South - 7:00 a.m.	Trip #26: Blue Ridge Parkway South - 7:00 a.m.
Trip #11: Point Lookout Trail - 7:30 a.m.	Trip #27: Point Lookout Trail - 7:30 a.m.
Friday Half-day Afternoon	Saturday Half-day Afternoon
Trip #12: Charles D. Owen Park - 1:30 p.m.	Trip #28: Charles D. Owen Park - 1:30 p.m.
Trip #13: Birding Techniques for Beginners - 1:30 p.m.	Trip #29: Birding Techniques for Beginners - 1:30 p.m.
Trip #14: YMCA Assembly Trails - 1:20 p.m.	Trip #30: YMCA Assembly Trails - 1:20 p.m.
Trip #15: Blue Ridge Parkway North - 1:15 p.m.	Trip #31: Blue Ridge Parkway North - 1:15 p.m.
Trip #16: Blue Ridge Parkway South - 1:00 p.m.	Trip #32: Blue Ridge Parkway South - 1:00 p.m.
Sunday Half-day Morning	
Hotspots—TBD	

****Some trips and plans may change depending on conditions and bird patterns.**

Registration begins March 21 at 2:00 p.m.

Register online at www.carolinabirdclub.org, for best availability of field trips.

Online registration closes April 25 at 8:00 a.m.

www.carolinabirdclub.org

Trip Descriptions

All-Day Trips

Trip #1 & 17: Blue Ridge Parkway North

This is a great trip for a wide variety of low and high elevation breeding woodland species of the Southern Appalachians. The trip begins at the Folk-Art Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway north of Asheville and continues north to Mount Mitchell. Along the way a wide variety of warblers occur, including Black-and-white, Hooded, Cerulean, Worm-eating, Ovenbird, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Chestnut-sided, as well as Scarlet Tanager; Rose-breasted Grosbeak; Veery; Red-eyed, Blue-headed, and Yellow-throated Vireo; and Eastern Wood Pewee. In the Mount Mitchell area look for Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, and possibly Pine Siskin and Red Crossbill. Time permitting the trip will continue down Curtis Creek Rd for Louisiana Waterthrush, Swainson's Warbler, and Acadian Flycatcher.

Restrooms: At Craggy Gardens and at Mount Mitchell

Walking: Mainly along overlooks

Distance: 10.7 miles

Trip #2 & 18: Curtis Creek Road/Mount Mitchell/BRP

This is basically the reverse of the Blue Ridge Parkway North trip and the same species should be seen. Swainson's Warblers are common along Curtis Creek Road as well as Black-throated Green and Hooded Warbler and Northern Parula at the lower end of the road as well as Worm-eating, Black-and-white, and Black-throated Blue Warbler farther up the road. It will start at the lower end of Curtis Creek Rd and continue up to the parkway to Mount Mitchell, then south on the BRP to the Asheville exit. Along the parkway Blackburnian Warblers are common at several locations as well as the usual higher elevation species such as Red-breasted Nuthatch, Blue-headed Vireo, some Brown Creeper, and possibly Pine Siskin and Red Crossbill.

Restrooms: At Curtis Creek Campground and at Mount Mitchell

Walking: Easy to moderate

Distance: 13.8 miles

Trip #3 & 19: Blue Ridge Parkway South

The trip will begin at Folk Art Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway and head south to Mount Pisgah, Black Balsam Road, and Devil's Courthouse, thus covering both high and low elevation habitats and species. Some of the many expected species include Canada, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Chestnut-sided Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Veery, Least Flycatcher, and possibly Red Crossbill, Peregrine Falcon and Ruffed Grouse, as well as other migrants just passing through.

Restrooms: At Pisgah campground and at Graveyard Fields

Walking: Easy to moderate

Distance: 10.7 miles

Trip #4 & 20: Max Patch Road

If Golden-winged Warbler is your target species this trip is your best opportunity, but it is also great for many other warblers and other songbirds such as Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Scarlet Tanager, Veery, Least Flycatcher, and many more. Time permitting on the return journey there will be a stop at Lake Junaluska to check for lingering waterfowl and shorebirds.

Restrooms: None after leaving the group meeting area

Walking: Easy

Distance: 40.4 miles

Trip #5 & 21: Green River Cove Road/Lake Adger headwaters

This is a great area for species commonly found along the Blue Ridge Escarpment including Louisiana Waterthrush, Swainson's, Kentucky, Worm-eating, Yellow-throated, and Prairie Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Yellow-throated Vireo, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and White-eyed Vireo. At Lake Adger in recent years, Prothonotary Warblers have been regularly found, Great Blue Herons nest in the trees near the road, Cliff Swallows nest under some of the bridges and Osprey and Bald Eagle can often be seen circling around overhead. This trip will require doubling up in vehicles as some stops have very limited parking.

Restrooms: Only at group meeting area and possibly at a park along the road if open

Walking: Easy

Distance: 40 miles

Trip Descriptions (continued)

Half-Day Trips

Trip #6 & 22: Chimney Rock State Park/Lake Lure

The stunning views alone make this trip a winner, but the park is also home to many wonderful birds and wildflowers. Breeding species include Worm-eating, Swainson's, Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, and Hooded Warbler, Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireo, Acadian Flycatcher, Peregrine Falcon and Broad-winged Hawk and you may also find a variety of migrants heading farther north. At Lake Lure you will likely add Yellow and Yellow-throated Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, swallows, sparrows, and possibly lingering waterfowl. The entrance fee to the park is \$15/person, which is not included in the CBC meeting registration, so please have the exact amount ready.

Restrooms: Both at the park and at Lake Lure

Walking: Easy to moderate

Distance: 21.9 miles

Trip 7, 12, 23, and 28: Charles D. Owen Park/Swannanoa River

This county park is a popular spot for local birders. Both Orchard and Baltimore Oriole as well as Warbling and Yellow-throated Vireo nest along the river and/or the tree lined lake. Continuing the walk from the park to the farm fields at neighboring Warren Wilson College, birders frequently encounter shrub-edge and open-field birds such as Yellow-breasted Chat, Northern Bobwhite, and a variety of sparrows including Grasshopper, Field, Song, and possibly some late-departing Swamp, Savannah, White-crowned, and White-throated.

Restrooms: At Owen Park

Walking: Easy

Distance: 7 miles

Trip #8 & 24: Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary

This 10-acre tract in Asheville is managed by the Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society. It consists of mixed hardwood and pine, along with early successional habitat, and includes a wetland that abuts Beaver Lake. It is often an excellent spot for migrating songbirds such as Blue-winged Warbler and Northern Waterthrush, but is also home to many breeding species such as Northern Rough-winged, Tree, and Barn Swallows; Green Herons; Yellow Warblers; American Redstarts; and Orchard and Baltimore Orioles. Also, look for lingering waterfowl on Beaver Lake.

Restrooms: Nearby, but not at the sanctuary

Walking: Easy

Distance: 18.8 miles

Trip #9, 15, 25, & 31: Blue Ridge Parkway North

This trip is similar to the all-day trip on the Parkway north and will also start at the Folk-Art Center but will end in the Craggy Gardens area. Many of the same species can be found as with the all-day trip such as Black-and-white, Hooded, Cerulean, Worm-eating, Ovenbird, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian and Chestnut-sided Warblers. We could also find Scarlet Tanager; Rose-breasted Grosbeak; Veery; Red-eyed, Blue-headed, and Yellow-throated Vireo; and Eastern Wood Pewee.

Restrooms: At Craggy Gardens if trip goes that far

Walking: Easy to moderate

Distance: 10.7 miles

Trip #10, 16, 26, & 32: Blue Ridge Parkway South

The trip will begin at The French Broad River overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway and head south to Mount Pisgah Campground. Some of the many expected species include Canada, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Chestnut-sided Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Veery, Least Flycatcher, and possibly Red Crossbill, Peregrine Falcon and Ruffed Grouse as well as some passage migrants.

Restrooms: At Pisgah Inn

Walking: Easy to moderate

Distance: 10.7 miles

Trip #11 & 27: Point Lookout Trail

From Ridgecrest this paved, forested trail, once US 70, but now closed to traffic, parallels US 40 going down the edge of the escarpment and is a fine location for mid to lower elevation forest species common to the escarpment. This includes Ovenbird, Black-throated Green, Hooded, Worm-eating, and Black-and-white Warblers, as well as, at times, Kentucky, Swainson's, and Cerulean Warblers. Also expect Scarlet Tanager, various Vireo species, Gnatcatchers, and other spring breeding species as well as possibly some forest migrants heading farther north.

Restrooms: Not on location, but there will be a gas station nearby at the start and end of the walk.

Walking: Largely downhill going out, and uphill coming back.

Restrooms: Only at group meeting location

Distance: 5 miles

Trip Descriptions (continued)

Trip #13 & 29: Birding Techniques for Beginners

This trip will dedicate a large amount of time to teaching various birding techniques including: locating birds, basic vocal and visual identification tips, group birder etiquette, and other useful birding tips. The trip is designed for any beginning to intermediate birder looking to enhance their birding skills. The trip leader will select the location. It may be on Assembly grounds or nearby. Beyond the development of these basic birding techniques and skills, participants will also be able to hone these skills while in the field looking at live birds. This trip will take a slower approach with time spent focusing on techniques and field marks rather than a complete species inventory of everything at the park.

Restrooms: Yes

Walking: Easy

Distance: Probably 0-10 miles

Trip #14 & 30: YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly Trails

With over 1000 acres of wooded property and miles of trails, there are many possibilities for a variety of species. The trails near the entrance to the property include stream-front woods with rhododendron thickets where Swainson's Warblers can be heard calling that often can be found close up. Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, Hooded, and Pine Warblers, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Scarlet Tanager, and Wood Thrush also all commonly occur along the trails. Around the pond look for swifts, swallows, phoebes, and a variety of other open-area birds.

Restrooms: At lodge and at trailhead at lower end of entrance road

Walking: Easy at lower end of property, steeper for trails at upper end of property.

Distance: On-site, one-mile drive to beginning of lower trails

Spring Meeting Notes on Fieldtrips

- All-day trips and BRP half-day trips have a limit of 12. All other trips have a limit of 15.
- Plan to bring water, snacks and lunch for the all-day trips since there may not be food available along the route unless otherwise noted in the field trip description. There are several restaurants and sandwich shops near the hotel so you can purchase takeout for lunch the night before.
- Water and snacks are also a good idea for the half-day field trips.
- All trips will leave from the hotel at the times indicated on the schedule. Look for the placard with your trip number. There will be a sheet with all directions for your trips e-mailed to you in advance. Please bring it on each trip as caravans sometimes break down and, if so, you'll still be able to get to the trip site. Get the leader's cell number before you leave, just in case.
- If you prefer to meet the group at the site, be sure to inform the leader and make a notation on the field trip attendee list so the leader will not be looking for you at the hotel.
- The times listed on the sign-in sheets are when cars are lined up in the parking lot and leaving. Please be there at least 10 minutes early and identify yourself to the leader. If you decide not to go on a trip, either scratch through your name beforehand on the supplied lists on the registration tables or tell the leader. Please consider doing this in advance so others may use the open spot if desired.
- We try to take as few vehicles as possible on field trips to save gas, make caravanning easier, and to make better use of the limited parking that exists at some stops. Please plan on carpooling, and if you would like to drive and have room for new or old friends, please let your trip leader know.

CBC Research, educational and conservation grants are available through the Carolina Bird Club.

For additional information visit www.carolinabirdclub.org.

CBC Bonus Field Trip
Spring In the Sandhills
May 30 & 31, 2020
by Susan Campbell & Steve Shultz, Trip Leaders



Red-cockaded Woodpecker,
photo by Mary Sonis

Late spring is the perfect time to bird in the Sandhills of North Carolina. Breeding season is reaching its peak and temperatures are still comfortable. With over 70 species found in the area in May, we should have good looks at many of the Sandhills finest!

Targets will of course include endemic Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Bachman's Sparrow. Other species found in the piney woods such as Brown-headed Nuthatch, Blue-headed Vireo, Summer Tanager and Eastern Wood Pewee should be easy to find. With some luck we should also encounter a pair or two of Loggerhead Shrikes. Also, Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Common Nighthawks, which tend to arrive later in the spring, will now finally be on territories as well. This is the best time to find Northern Bobwhite as they do not begin to call until mornings are a bit warmer. And last but not least, Mississippi Kite, now nesting throughout the region, should be visible in a spot or two foraging overhead later in the day as insect activity picks up.

The group will visit a variety of habitats over the course of the weekend. We plan to visit a selection of longleaf forests, bottomland hardwoods, open fields and pasture, as well as a couple local lakes along the way. A good bit of time will be spent on State property: Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve and the Sandhills Game Land are hotspots known for producing good looks at local species. But we will also stop at several good private locations that ought to be quite birdy. For those who are interested, there will be an optional foray for goatsuckers and owls on Saturday evening in Southern Pines. Also be prepared for a few surprises: depending on bird activity, we may have some very special opportunities to see a few feathered friends up close!

There will be light hiking during the trip, but the terrain in the area is quite flat and there are established trails at most of the places we will visit. There will be rest rooms, convenience stores and gas stations along the way. And although roads will be sandy (in areas like the Game Lands), we will not venture any place that two-wheel drive cannot handle.

Cost: \$25 (Trip Limited to 15 participants)

To sign-up, please contact Steve at sshultz@nc.rr.com or 919-629-7226.



Mississippi Kite,
photo by Jerry Kershner

Photos from the Litchfield Beach Trip

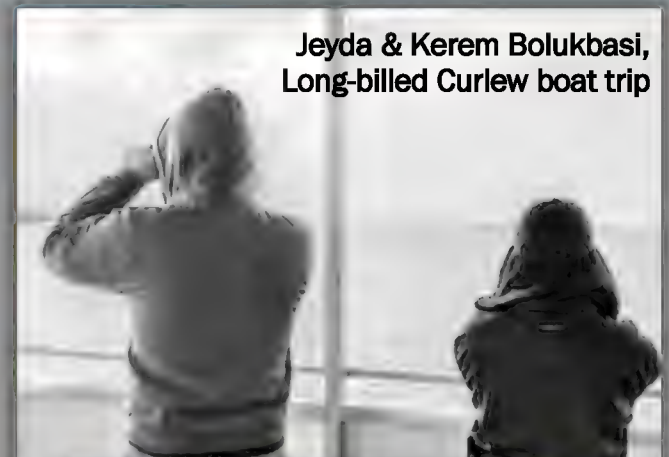
All photos by Jill Midgett



Spectacled Owl
at Center for Birds of Prey



Leucistic Red-tailed Hawk
at Center for Birds of Prey



Jeyda & Kerem Bolukbasi,
Long-billed Curlew boat trip



Jeyda & Kerem Bolukbasi,
Long-billed Curlew boat trip



Sally & Alan Bolton



Peregrine Falcon at
Center for Birds of Prey

How I Got Into Birding

By Judith Davis



Judith Davis & her son Jamie birding at Beech Forest on Cape Cod in 2014

“Birding” was not in my vocabulary as a child growing up in the Piedmont section of North Carolina, and I would not become a “birder” until I moved to New England many years later. The best memory of my childhood birding, however, was that our elementary school participated in trying to restore Eastern Bluebirds to our area by having a Bluebird nest box-building competition at our school (a long time ago!). I so wanted to build that Bluebird house, and my Dad helped me. We won first prize and I was thrilled. We put the birdhouse up in our backyard on a pine tree and we had bluebirds the first year. I loved them so much. Much later, my Dad built wonderful feeders in his retirement. He made them for his friends and relatives. When they retired, my parents always had feeder birds, and Dad built a

few feeders for me over the years. Little did I know that I would become a Bluebird nest box monitor on Cape Cod about 50 years after building that nest box!

I majored in Biology and English in college but was unaware of the possibility of a career in Ornithology, especially for women in those days, and so I pursued medical sciences. But one thing I remember well from those early Biology days was how much I loved sketching and making field notes in Biology. A professor in graduate school said that I was more of a descriptive scientist than a quantitative one, and I always loved drawing in science. That would have to go on a proverbial back burner for about 30 years. I went on with my careers, first as scientist professor and later, an Episcopal priest—very diverse careers. When I went to seminary at Yale (the first time I lived in New England), I would go to the Long Island Sound where I noticed the shorebirds (always my favorites).



Bluebird nest box with female Eastern Bluebird on Cape Cod



Barred Owl at Acadia National Park

Fast forward a number of years to about 1995, when I served as a weekend priest at the Episcopal Chapel on Block Island (off the coast of RI). The vicarage and chapel were near a small wetland on the Island. I spent six weeks there the winter of 1995, and over the next 20 years I would go several times a year to serve the church. Early one morning, I heard an incredible sound from the wetland, and wondered what could make that sound. I looked out into the wetland (sans binoculars) and saw, perched on the reeds, a male Red-winged Blackbird, although I didn't know its name then. I loved the “kon-ka-ree” sound and the bird was just gorgeous, displaying its red epaulets. It became my “spark bird,” and I was hooked for life. I had never seen anything quite so wonderful as the Red-winged, which I have continued to love, especially during the 17 years I lived in New England.

My Dad had an old WWII Army-issued pair of binoculars (which I still have) and I asked if I could borrow them for birding; I used them until 2014, when I finally got Nikon Monarch X, 8.5 x 45 binos, which I always keep in my car, just in case I might see a life bird. I have a magnet on the back of my car that says, “I brake for birds!” So, I began birding seriously in about 2008 when I moved to Cape Cod to be rector of an Episcopal parish. My son, Jamie Gilson (who has given two presentations at the Carolina Bird Club Winter meetings), loved to go to the beach in the afternoons, and we began to notice the shorebirds. I bought a Peterson field guide of birds of New England from the fabulous Bird Watchers General Store in Orleans, MA. Fast forward again to 2012. I suggested that Jamie and I go out every afternoon during Lent and study nature. I promised to keep a field sketchbook and record what we saw and experienced. And since I was particularly interested in pairing the Hebrew Psalms with nature images, I would reflect on the Psalms in my watercolor field sketchbook. I kept that sketchbook journal every day of Lent, except for a blizzard, and faithfully recorded the birds and creatures we saw (and took photographs). On Easter Sunday, Jamie, who was 9, said, “Do we have to quit our nature study since Lent is over?” I said, “of course not;” He and I were hooked by then, and so we continued.



Watercolor painting of Northern Pintail and Mallards on Cape Cod

That June, we attended a conference at Star Island, off the coast of Portsmouth, NH, in the Isles of Shoals. Every morning we went on the bird walk at 6:30 a.m. We had never been on a bird walk with a guide. We loved it (well, except for getting up early).

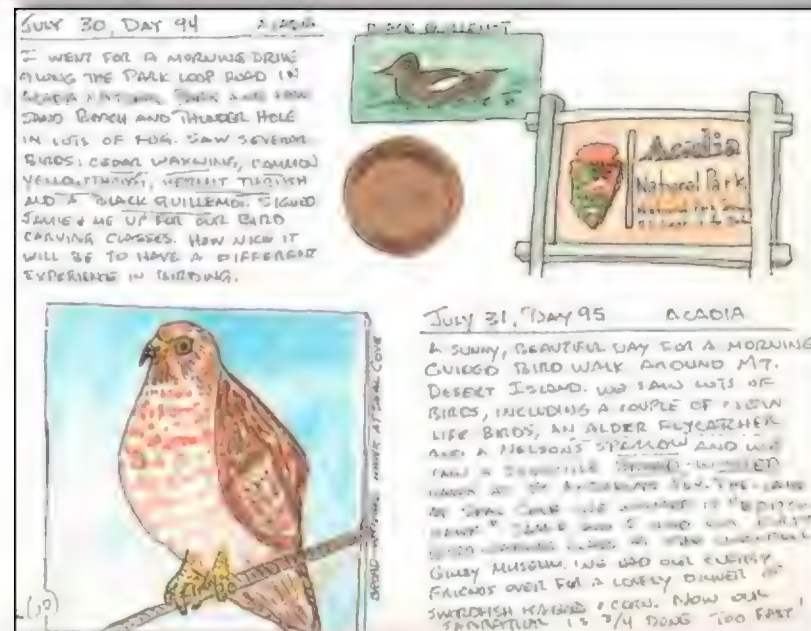
How I Got Into Birding (continued from page 5)



Great Black-backed gull with chicks on Appledore Island in the Isles of Shoals

One of the birders noticed how much Jamie knew about birds and suggested we find an adult bird club for him. That fall we joined the Cape Cod Bird Club, and we were officially birders for life. Jamie was one of two kids in the 400-member adult bird club. We became very active members. I was editor of *The Kingfisher*, the Club's newsletter for five years, and later became President. Jamie loved the club and birding

and received a scholarship to Hog Island's Coastal Marine Studies for Teens program. He and I went to Family Camp at Hog Island for two years and loved seeing Atlantic Puffins. We also go to Star Island every summer for a week and Jamie is now the bird guide for the bird walks.



Sketchbook from sabbatical



Snowy Owl on Cape Cod

One of my best birding experiences was during 2014, when I was awarded a National Clergy Renewal Grant from the Lily Foundation for a four-month sabbatical. My grant proposal was to image the Psalms of nature in national parks and islands, and, of course, that meant four months of birding! Again, I kept a field journal sketchbook every day for four months, and recorded nature images and reflections on the Psalms. An example is, "Praise the Lord from the earth, your sea-monsters and all deeps. . . wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and winged birds" (Psalm 148: 7, 10). Yes, birds are in scripture, luckily for me!

The grant proposal title was "Beside the Living Stream: A Field Guide to the Psalms of Nature." "Beside the Living Stream" is a paraphrase from Psalm 23 by the great English hymn writer, Isaac Watts in the 18th century. Eventually, I hope to publish a book about that experience.



Barn Swallow fledgling at Star Island

During my 2014 sabbatical for rest and renewal, we saw incredible life birds on Vancouver Island and Alaska, from Chestnut-backed Chickadee to Rhinoceros Auklet, Black Oystercatchers to Tufted and Horned Puffins, Rufous Hummingbirds and Willow Ptarmigans. In New England we saw Atlantic Puffins and Ring-necked Pheasants, Barred Owls and Nelson's Sparrows. We took a two-week bird carving class at the Wendell Gilley Museum in Southwest Harbor, Maine; Jamie carved a Blue Jay and I, a Piping Plover. I saw my first Red-headed Woodpecker while on a retreat at the monastery of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie and saw great birds at Presque Isle State Park there. My best bird of 2014 was the Snowy Owl on Cape Cod. I got an incredible photograph of it as my fingers froze on the shutter in the 15-degree weather that winter, even as I stood in snow to capture the image. That photograph would win second place in the Silver Arts contest in Transylvania County, NC, in 2019, and it was juried in for art and photography shows on Cape Cod.



Jamie feeding a Black-capped Chickadee at Beech Forest

When Jamie was about 10, after we had joined the Cape Cod Bird Club, we went on a warbler walk at Beech Forest in Provincetown, MA. Later we would lead those walks. The birder guide had brought bird seed and said if we held our hands out with seed and were very still, a Black-capped Chickadee would feed from our hands. I'll have to admit that one of the highlights of birding for me was when that tiny bird landed on my hand. It was one of the best mem-



Sketchbook from sabbatical

ories of my life. One of my artist colleagues on Cape Cod did a pastel painting of a Black-capped Chickadee feeding from Jamie's hand from a photograph I was lucky enough to get.

Want to share your own "How I Got Into Birding" story?

Black Mountain, NC Registration Form

Registration Begins March 21, 2020 @ 2pm

Register online for Best Availability of Field Trips at www.carolinabirdclub.org

Please complete all information below:

Name	First Name:	Last Name:		
Address	Street:	City:	State:	Zip Code:
Contact info	Phone Number:	Email Address:		
Emergency Contact	Name:	Phone Number:		
Member Meeting Registration	Number of members attending:	X \$30 each	= \$ _____ (total)	
Non-member Meeting Registration	Number of non-members attending:	X \$35 each	= \$ _____ (total)	
Field Trip Sign-Up	A.M. 1st/2nd Choice	P.M. 1st/2nd Choice	All Day 1st/2nd Choice	
Friday	/	/	/	
Saturday	/	/	/	

Meeting Registration at the door costs \$40.

Room Type - Reservation	Thursday Room	Friday Room	Saturday Room	Cost*	Make Room Selection ("X")
Single room (3 nights)	X	X	X	\$374	
Single room (2 nights)	X	X		\$265.50	
Single room (2 nights)		X	X	\$265.50	
Double room (3 nights)	X	X	X	\$450.00	
Double room (2 nights)	X	X		\$331.00	
Double room (2 nights)		X	X	\$331.00	
Three-person room (3 nights)	X	X	X	\$525.00	
Three-person room (2 nights)	X	X		\$473.50	
Three-person room (2 nights)		X	X	\$473.50	
Four-person room (3 nights)	X	X	X	\$700.00	
Four-person room (2 nights)	X	X		\$539.00	
Four-person room (2 nights)		X	X	\$539.00	

*The rates for rooms include breakfast on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and dinner on Friday and Saturday

If you are not staying in a room onsite but want meals, meal plans are available. Do not pay for meal plans if you are also paying for a room!

Total meal package _____ x \$77.00 = \$_____ Saturday dinner only _____ x \$20.50 = \$_____ (free for trip leader or speaker)

Make check payable to Carolina Bird Club and send to: CBC, 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst, NC 28374

Club policy requires all field trip participants to comply with the field trip leader's assessment and requests concerning the physical ability of each participant to make or complete the trip.

I will release and discharge (and will not make a claim against) the Carolina Bird Club for injury, death, or property damage arising from my participation at this meeting and/or Club field trips. This release of liability is entered into on behalf of all members of my family, including all minors accompanying me. I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of any such minors and that I am over 18 years of age.

Signature _____ Date _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Processing of mail-in registrations will not begin until online registration opens.

Pre-Registration ends at 8 a.m. on April 25, 2020

Cancellations will be refunded if received by 6pm on April 8, 2020

Cancel by contacting the Headquarters Secretary at hq@carolinabirdclub.org



Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

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Raleigh, NC 27612

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Upcoming CBC Meetings

Spring - Black Mountain, NC - April 30 - May 3, 2020

Fall - Beaufort, SC - October 1 - 3, 2020

Winter - Outer Banks, NC - January 14 - 17, 2021

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**Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of
December, February, April, June, August, and October.**

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The CBC Newsletter is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Founded in 1937, the membership is open to anyone interested in birds, natural history, and conservation. **Current dues are:** Individual & non-profit, \$30; Family and Business, \$35; Student, \$15; Patron, \$50 and up; Life, \$500; Associate Life (in household with Life Member), \$100 (both Life memberships can be paid in four annual installments).

Membership dues include access to publications: the **CBC Newsletter** and **The Chat**, which is only available on line. Tax deductible as allowable by law.

Cost for CBC bird checklists, including postage: 10@\$5.45, 25@\$13.40, 50@\$27.00, and 100@\$54.00.

Join the CBC at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/dues/>. Enter change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile/>. Order checklists from: CBC Headquarters Secretary, 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst, NC 28374.
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Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

CBC Newsletter

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For members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.,
Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

Volume 66

June 2020

Number 3

Fall Meeting on the South Carolina Coast

October 1, 2, and 3

by William Burke



Great Blue Heron, Savannah NWR
photo by Deborah Roy

Picturesque Beaufort, SC offers some of the best birding along the Carolina coast. The 2011 Beaufort fall meeting tallied 203 species and our 2016 meeting tallied 191 species. Both are records for the club in the last 20 years. Our field trips will be to some of the most hallowed ground for lowcountry birders. Think of the field trips to Bear Island... Donnelley... Savannah NWR... Botany Bay WMA... Caw Caw... Francis Beidler Forest... Hunting Island State Park... Pinckney NWR..., and the Savannah Spoil Site (Friday only). We also hope to have a field trip to Paris Island for all of you who miss bootcamp. Field trips will be offered on Friday, October 2 and Saturday, October 3.

We will have receptions on Friday and Saturday and because of the pandemic, we have not confirmed our programs for those two evenings. At our banquet on Saturday, Beaufort mayor Billie Keyserling will welcome us and provide a brief introduction to our newest National Park. I expect he will encourage you to visit some of the historical sites that make up The Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. *(continued on page 2)*



Birding During the Pandemic

by Craig Watson, Mac Williams, & William Burke

Birding during the Pandemic: Serenity in the Swamp, *by Craig Watson*

I am fortunate. I am fortunate that I live in an area that is in short driving distance to excellent birding areas that are not closed to public use. I live East of the Cooper River, on the north side of Charleston County. All of the local places in the Charleston area are closed to recreational activity or access; no trips

to the beach, the islands, local hotspots, etc. I was therefore obliged to think about places where I could bird and practice social distancing, and enjoy the birds and solitude if I was to survive an unknown period of "stay at home". I came to realize that the landscape in which I live has millions of acres of protected and managed lands and which are open to the public and are about an hour's drive or less from where I live. Some of these are Santee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Cape Romain NWR, Francis Marion National Forest, Santee Coastal Reserve and Santee Delta WMAs, and Bear Island and Donnelley WMAs.

I have visited and birded the majority of these areas in the last month, and the common factor in each of these areas is almost the complete lack of other visitors. One of my favorite nearby places is the I'on Swamp area of the Francis Marion National Forest. This area is historically known for the presence of Bachman's Warbler, last reported in the mid 20th Century, with the densest known breeding population of the species historically occurring here in Charleston County in this area. *(continued on page 3)*

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- How I Became a Birder
- Research Grants

Fall Meeting on the South Carolina Coast *(continued from page 1)*



Holiday Inn, Beaufort
photo courtesy IGH.com

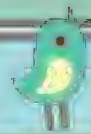
Our headquarters for the meeting is the Holiday Inn Beaufort, 225 Boundary Street. It is a step up over some of our prior motels. The Holiday Inn will host our registration, meetings, and the Saturday night buffet for our banquet. The CBC rates for rooms are (double beds) for the nights of Oct. 1 will be \$159 and \$109 for the other two nights. These rates are due to the heavy demand for U.S. Marine graduations. All rooms and rates include a microwave, fridge, and complimentary Wi-Fi connection. There is a 24-hour notice cancellation policy on individual reservations. Check-in time is 3pm and check-out time is 12 noon. Cut-off date for making reservations under the group block is September 8, 2020. Any reservations made after that date are subject to hotel availability and available rates. Contact the Holiday Inn at 843-379-3100 to make your reservations. Be sure to mention the Carolina Bird Club in order to receive the group rates. The sales manager is Lenny Smith.

Other options for lodging are the Quality Inn at Town Center, or the [Hampton Inn](#), located at [2342 Boundary Street](#). These may be cheaper but neither had room for our meeting because of the graduations.

The executive committee recognizes that the Fall meeting may need to be cancelled but we are hopeful the meeting will happen because it will be safer to travel and be with others. We hope that you and yours continue to stay safe through these challenging times.

Some Facts About Beaufort:

- To say that Beaufort is old in US terms is an understatement. When Port Royal Sound was named, William Shakespeare had not been born nor had the Spanish Armada sailed against England. In 1520, less than thirty years after Columbus discovered America, Captain Francisco Gordillo, exploring from Hispaniola, stopped near Port Royal Sound long enough to name the region Santa Elena, one of the oldest European place names in America.
 - After several failed forts by the Spanish and French, the English established the town of Beaufort in 1711.
 - Paris Island, home of the marine training facility, is located just outside of Beaufort. There is both a golf course and a Marine Museum located there.
 - During the Civil War, the U.S. Navy and Army took Beaufort in 1861 and Reconstruction came to Beaufort while the white plantation owners fled and soon 10,000 former slaves were being educated and inducted into the US Army. It is this remarkable time that has resulted in the establishment of the Reconstruction Era National Historic Park.
- Shrimping will be in full season at the time of our meeting, so the local seafood should be at its best. A list of restaurants will be available at registration.



Welcome New CBC Members!

Grainne O'Grady
& Warren Weisler
Raleigh, NC

Diane Johnston
Jefferson, NC

Susan Skolochenko
Morganton, NC

Steven Goodman
Asheville, NC

James & Nancy Hackett
Seneca, SC

Cedar Rock Garden
Club
Lenoir, NC

Meredith Boothe
Boone, NC

Caroline Deegan
Geraldine Gannon
Chapel Hill, NC

Lucinda Rondeau
Conway, SC

Kelly Heath
Asheboro, NC

Regina Whittington
Cincinnati, Oh

Patricia Kappmeyer
Hilton Head Island,
SC

John Tjaarda
West Columbia, SC

Theresa Pepin
Knoxville, TN

Virginia Sanchez
Charleston, SC

Jean Askew
Seneca, SC

Chris Mansfield
Mt. Pleasant, SC

Blaise Strenn
Raleigh, NC



Opportunities for Young Birders

Carolina Bird Club offers scholarships for birders 19 and under living in the Carolinas, who are members of the Carolina Young Birders Club.

Scholarships provide assistance in attending bird-related events, such as camps, workshop, training programs or CBC seasonal meetings.



Prothonotary Warbler,
photo by Deborah Roy

Birding During the Pandemic: Serenity in the Swamp (continued), by Craig Watson

That sounds like a long time ago, but I was born about that time, and I know one local birder who is still birding with us, who was fortunate enough to be one of those who observed the Bachman's Warbler locally. While it is doubtful that this bird still exists, there are some who continue to search this area, as I did when I was working there as a biologist with the U.S. Forest Service. For now, I will enjoy the "sweet sweet sweet" of the Prothonotary Warbler, the "churee churee churee" of the Kentucky Warbler, the various zips of the Northern Parula, and watch the graceful glide of the Swallow-tailed Kite as it skims the treetops over the swamp. And, I will listen for that most sought after eastern warbler, named after a Reverend from Charleston and whose dear friend came to paint the species from locally-collected specimens, and whose legacy was the foundation of one of our greatest bird conservation organizations in the United States, the National Audubon Society. Stay safe and Happy Birding!

Backyard Birding During the Pandemic by Mac Williams

Since the first week in March, my family has been in quarantine. But, since my wife and I grew up in homes that stressed self-reliance, we have ample larders and we really haven't had to go out other than to get perishables and prescriptions.

During the quarantine, I've been making a point to take the time to go and sit and ruminate on the questions of the day while sitting in a lawn chair in my backyard. My house was built in 1962, and the previous owners loved trees. There are 57 mature trees on my half-acre lot, including mature magnolias, Darlington oaks, Laurel Oaks, Sweetgums, azaleas, loblollies, and even one Longleaf Pine. There's also a thick bamboo privacy hedge that fills with Northern Cardinals, Ruby-Crowned Kinglets, White-throated Sparrows, and Brown Thrashers right when twilight ends and darkness sets in. You can hear their chips, chuks, and typewriter sounds (kinglets) as they get ready to roost for the evening. But, before dusk comes and the neighbor-



Ruby-crowned Kinglet,
photo by Deborah Roy



Summer Tanager,
photo by Mary Sonis

hood Barred Owl starts a-hootin', I enjoy seeing about 30+ different species of birds in my yard every afternoon.

As I write this with the windows open, I can hear Carolina Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, Carolina Wrens, Red-Eyed Vireos, Common Grackles, Brown-Headed Nuthatches, Brown-Headed Cowbirds, Northern Mockingbirds, Downy Woodpeckers, Summer Tanagers, and Great-Crested Flycatchers singing and chipping their hearts out. The other night I heard a lonely Northern Cardinal start singing at 12:30AM--poor fella. Since April 19th (12 days thus far), I've had groups of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks come through every day and give me lengthy looks at them on my feeders. I hadn't seen any in my yard in over five years. There is a quiet solace in birding the same patch through the seasons and years.

And, as you sit and ponder life and how you can't remember what day of the week it is anymore, the little birdies will keep you company as they go about doing their thing. Meanwhile we get to sit and marvel that we are there, that we are alive, and that we get to enjoy such lovely and wholesome beauty in the relative safety of our own backyards.

Birding on the Farm During the Pandemic, by William Burke

I feel guilty about my birding because I am so lucky and privileged. I live on a 40-acre farm with timber land on three sides and an abandoned farm across the road. I have never had the chance or taken the opportunity to bird it every day and now have the opportunity. I have had



Swainson's Warbler,
photo by Irvin Pitts

63 species in April including 11 warblers and 4 vireos. I counted 5 Ovenbirds today. I hear a Hooded Warbler virtually every day but have yet to see one. The Swainson's and Kentucky Warblers have been more cooperative. I am awakened most days by Whippoorwills and am serenaded by Wood Thrushes every day. After the whips my next bird is often a Phoebe followed by a Yellow-throated Warbler. Green Herons and Wood Ducks visit the pond in front of the house every day and I can close the day by having a beer on the front porch and being visited by hummingbirds. Today an Orchard Oriole serenaded me. When I am not birding I have been building a coop for our 6 new chicks.



Kentucky Warbler,
photo by Mary Sonis

On Social Distancing for Birders and Birds: **The Proper use of Playback, Share the Love-Share the Shore, and** **A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words**

by Craig Watson

We are all affected by the Social Distancing recommended by our local municipalities, states, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Some are more affected than others. Yet for all of us, I hope that you are able to get out and safely bird while following the requirements and recommendations of the CDC and local authorities. As this pandemic became more prevalent some joked that social distancing was not hard for us birders, since as introverts, we've been practicing that most of our lives. That is true for some, but not all birders are introverts.

All joking aside, following social distancing guidelines is a serious matter and there are relevant principles that apply to us as birders and how we behave out in the field practicing Social Distancing with other birders and even the birds themselves.

There are three areas that I would like to briefly present where the birding community can most likely make improvements. These recommendations can and will make things better for our birding community and for the health and survival of the birds that we are observing and studying. These are:

- 1) The proper use of playback
- 2) protecting waterbirds and shorebirds
- 3) the ethics of "capturing the moment" by getting that great photo!

The Proper Use of Playback – This topic gets a lot of varied discussion in birding circles, from those who totally oppose its use and those who use it to "extremes." I personally have observed professionals use a screech owl and chickadee playback session played loudly for up to 15 minutes to attract birds! To me that is very disruptive, far beyond what is acceptable. Playback can be used by professionals to gather scientific evidence, such as for surveys for Black Rail, yet professionals are concerned about their own use of such protocols. For us, we want to simply use playback to get a view of a bird or draw birds more out into the open for viewing.

The Carolina Bird Club officially recommends that you follow one primary source for the use of playback, the ABA Code of Ethics (<https://www.aba.org/aba-code-of-birding-ethics/>). Section 1b applies to our use of playback and says this:

"(b) Avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger. Be particularly cautious around active nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display sites, and feeding sites. Limit the use of recordings and other audio methods of attracting birds, particularly in heavily birded areas, for species that are rare in the area, and for species that are threatened or endangered. Always exercise caution and restraint when photographing, recording, or otherwise approaching birds."



USFWS Conducting Black Rail Survey,
Photo by Craig Watson

The primary idea is to not disturb the birds, particularly during the nesting season. Birds use sound for a variety of reasons and during breeding season it can be to attract a mate, defend territories, or assemble the family unit. No one really knows how playback affects these behaviors, except that it surely disrupts their normal routines. Imagine someone outside of your home calling out to you unnecessarily, disturbing your family, and calling out to your mate, and then imagine it day after day throughout the season. You'll probably poke your head out of the door and bam, you've been seen! Moreover, you are most likely highly annoyed! Outside of breeding season the impacts may be less-- no one knows-- but it perhaps does not disrupt the birds as it does during the breeding cycle.

Another great source for the use of playback is David Sibley's guide and recommendations to the proper use of playback (<https://www.sibleyguides.com/2011/04/the-proper-use-of-playback-in-birding/>), and to quote Mr. Sibley, "There is no debate that playback (playing a recording of a bird's song) is one of the most powerful tools in a birder's struggle to see birds in the wild."

(continued on page 5)



National Audubon Society



Excessive playback by birders,
Photo courtesy of Sumit Sen, Birds of India

On Social Distancing for Birders and Birds *(continued from page 4)*

Even he recognizes that the level of disturbance to birds is not well known. In his treatment of playback, Mr. Sibley provides both the arguments for and against the use of playback, and I encourage you to read the full article. Perhaps the most important section to read is titled “What Not to Do!” The idea presented here is not to use playback for long periods and at high volumes. The two following sections, “Respect the Birds,” and “Respect the Birders” are also filled with good tidbits of information on the use of playback. Basically, keep your social distance and minimize the interaction.

A limited number of studies have shown that use of playback may disturb individuals, but perhaps does not influence populations. However, recall the mention of Black Rail previously, and where there are already suppressed populations of individuals. Extreme care must be used when using recordings around threatened or endangered species, as the consequences to individuals can impact such a population. And remember, it is illegal in some places and parks, so be sure to research local rules and regulations for any parks or managed facilities before you use playback.

There are many different situations in which you will find yourself birding and where you will have to decide about the use of playback, disturbance, respecting the birds, and respecting other birders. Keep your social distance, and use the ABA Code of Ethics and David Sibley’s advice when tempted to use playback, and, to reiterate it: keep your social distance!

Although not playback, the use of laser pointers can also be highly disturbing to birds. In fact, lasers are often used to control problem birds under certain conditions. Birds can see the beam! Be careful and if you must use this, use the beam to direct attention to a landmark you can use to direct others to the bird. Do not point the laser directly at the bird or onto the bird!

Share the Love, Share the Shore! – During certain times of the year, particularly during breeding season and both migration periods, shorebirds and waterbirds congregate in nesting colonies or stage in large flocks for breeding. In many cases they choose those places we all love to visit, the beaches and inlets of our fabulous coasts. As birders, beachgoers, conservationists, and citizen scientists, we must recognize the vulnerable state that many of our coastal birds are in. Impacts from humans are increasing, particularly sea level rise encroaching upon nesting and roosting habitat, and we cannot discount the disturbance from increased foot traffic and off-leash animals. I bird the islands and the beaches of South Carolina as often as I can, and I have witnessed huge disturbance events during those times. However, on one recent trip to an inlet near here, I observed thousands of birds roosting at high tide because no one was allowed on the beach, no humans, no off-leash animals, as a result of the beaches being closed during the pandemic, and it only took a week for birds to acclimate to the lack of humans on the beach. Birds respond positively to reduced disturbance, and it is important to protect and manage crucial loafing, foraging, and roosting areas for these birds. This is a great example of how forced social distancing on humans has at least temporarily benefitted resident and migrating shorebirds and waterbirds. These birds have in some sense always practiced social distancing for their survival, yet they are far too often disturbed by people getting too close. How close is too close? If the birds begin to wing flap, walk quickly, and flush, you are far too close! These birds need their energy to breed and migrate, and each time they are flushed they unnecessarily expend energy that must be replenished quickly to carry out these high-energy activities. Audubon New York has a campaign to educate us all on how to protect these vulnerable birds at our coastlines (<https://ny.audubon.org/conservation/share-love-sharetheshore>). Within this article you’ll find links to behaviors you can follow to reduce disturbance, how you can help protect these species, and what you can do to educate other users about our vulnerable coastlines. Shorebird populations have plunged over the past few decades, and waterbird populations are declining at rapid rates. Do your part and let the birds “shelter in place,” and let ‘em rest and let ‘em nest. If you are interested in volunteering to help these birds, please visit Audubon North Carolina (<https://nc.audubon.org/ways-help/volunteer>) or Audubon South Carolina (<https://sc.audubon.org/conservation/shorebird-stewards>).



Child flushing
Black Skimmers,
gulls, and terns.
Photo courtesy
of Florida Fish
& Wildlife
Conservation
Commission
(FWC)

Flock of
undisturbed
Red Knots in
South Carolina,
photo by Nolan
Schillerstrom,
Icarus Imagery



A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words – Actually derived from “One Look is Worth a Thousand Words,” photos of birds capture our imagination and many of us live vicariously through the work of excellent photographers. As I was researching information from this piece, I came across a famous quote, “If your pictures aren’t good enough, you’re not close enough.” Wow! Then I found this one - “Only photograph what you love.” Birds are certainly the subject of our love but getting too close can be very disturbing. I’m sure the first quote wasn’t regarding birds, yet we as birders and photographers, both amateurs and professionals, must be aware of our actions and how we affect birds, and keep a good social distance. I am often reminded when I am out birding, while trying to capture the moment, of events where getting “that photo” showed significant disrespect for nearby birders and the bird they were attempting to photograph. One case was a few years ago where an oddly plumaged passerine bird was so continually harassed with playback that the bird eventually left the area and was not seen again, and this all occurred during the breeding season! And, most recently on a trip to Minnesota, guidelines for viewing a rare owl were distributed for photographers and birders not to block the road or get too close to the owl in question. Well, you know the rest of the story.

We as birders, and photographers, must do all we can to communicate to our fellow birders and photographers that this kind of behavior is not acceptable. We must distance ourselves and not disturb the bird. Birder photographers have a wide assortment of photographic equipment to use, and I have a simple point and shoot camera that zooms out to 260x; I social distance myself from the bird, reaching out with the lens to ‘capture that moment.’ Much of this behavior is addressed in my first section of this article, the part about playback, yet some will go to extraordinary lengths to get the photo. I’ll accept a poor-quality photo any day to document a rarity rather than disturb it by getting too close. Again, there are many situations you will find yourself in when you want to photograph a bird, and you will have to decide quickly what to do in most cases. If you can put into practice what the ABA Code of Ethics suggests, and bear in mind the issues with playback, you can develop your birding and stalking skills. If you exercise these social distancing rules, you’ll be a better birder/photographer:

- Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas.
- Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites.
- Try to use a blind or hide and take advantage of natural cover.
- Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.
- Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist.



Left, birders give space to owl and open lane on road;
Right, one person getting too close, blocking road;
Bottom left, birders blocking road and getting too close to owl.
All photos by Craig Watson



In these modern times, bird populations have drastically declined. It is estimated that we have lost 3 billion birds, permanently, in North America over the last 50 years. As our human population continues to grow, the impacts will be even greater. We must do all we can now to protect what we have. We all have a connection with birds and to continue enjoying this connection, we must practice social distancing at all times, not just during our pandemic.

Let ‘em rest, let ‘em nest!

Two Wonderful “How I Got Into Birding” Stories **from Our Members at Large**

By Les Coble, CBC Eastern NC Representative at Large



Les Coble

Birding can be done anytime, anywhere, and during oh so many activities. I can also just listen while working around the farm, horseback riding, biking and fishing on the local rivers and bays. After all, birds are everywhere. Birds add dimension to trips locally, nationally and around the world. My goal recently is to concentrate on bird activity and behavior, their interaction with each other and their environment. After all, this is how my birding started.

My first memory of the drama in bird life was during my first-year hunting. I was too young to be permitted to carry a rifle, but I was fascinated in the up-close encounters with wildlife through a pair of binoculars. I remember Sitting on a central Pennsylvania ridge in November a Great Horned Owl was being harassed by a murder of American Crow. After flying up the slope from tree to tree it finally settled on a large limb and hopped to the trunk. There it turned and placed it's back against the trunk. As the dozen crows came closer, more vocal with short and sharp, high pitched caws, the Owl began lifting a feathered leg and extending it outward. That clearly warned the crows how close they could safely come. After 20 minutes, during which I would never have been able to hear a deer, the crows moved on from this no-win encounter. I saw this twice during the

few years I hunted.

But I had never birded with a group. My family kept strictly to itself and my birding was limited to those hunting expeditions. While hunting, Whip Poor Wills often landed next to me, their wing flicking near another Will certainly kept me from looking for my quarry. Winter Wrens teased my patience to not smile too broadly as they walked over my boots and pant legs, and Red-tailed Hawks took rabbits while I sat as still as possible in the cold for yet another hour. Ruffed Grouse danced on downed logs after drumming.

While in college in MD my wife elected to take a 2-credit course in Ornithology, basically a field class in bird watching. The final exam included a practical on a minimum of 30 birds out of fifty required songs to be known. She spent Hours of studying for the exam, and we spent hours listening to bird songs instead of The Moody Blues. In late spring, summer and fall I was a seasonal ranger at nearby Shad Landing State Park, learning the birds as I led wildflower walks. There I saw my first Black-throated Blue Warblers, I presumed a pair, as they danced around a shrub a few feet off my trail. The ID pattern seemed out of place. The shimmering blue on the back, a dark facial mask, and a dark throat contrasting with snow white breast and belly caught my imagination. I would call this the “spark bird”, especially for an interest in warblers as my most sought after birds. Maryland took all new Naturalists on a statewide trip of the Parks in western MD. I saw my first Golden-winged Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, and Chestnut-sided Warbler in the Appalachians. In central MD my first Cerulean Warblers were seen, but under an upsetting scenario. One male and two females were feeding a Brown-headed Cowbird. I was disturbed two females would not be adding to the population that year.

We moved to my wife's hometown on Maryland's Eastern Shore where I was invited to participate in a bird walk. I knew many of the birds and was asked how many were on my life list. Life List? What's that? I returned home to open the Golden Guide my wife used in class and counted a whopping 290 species. My interest was further peaked as the founder of the club had talked of his 100th bird, 200th bird, and so on. What would be my 300th? It was spring migration on the Shore. At that time a 3-hour walk could yield 22 species of warblers! Within 2 weeks a Hooded Warbler ticked #300 and now I can't wait to see it every year (they nest here in Eastern NC on my farm).

Then I got to bird with Chandler Robbins, one of the Golden Guides authors, whose passion for birds and conservation was virulently contagious. I caught his enthusiasm. He always pressed me for details in sightings and I learned quickly. One day I could not answer an ID question when I stated I had seen a Long-billed Dowitcher. He asked in a skeptical tone, “How many tail feathers did it have?” Then, after my quizzed look, he proceeded to crease a smile with an, “I got ya moment.”

My other mentor was a history teacher who had started a bird club in the local high school and mentored dozens of future professionals. Many of those students still lead walks in the local club. In his retirement he started a Tour Company. I went on several trips to gain the experience and knowledge he desired for leading the groups. Trips to Arizona, Florida, Texas, Maine, and Canada's Maritimes had me see the Razorbill as life bird #400 and Purple-crowned Hummingbird as #500.

As a sidebar life bird #600 is unknown as the AOU had a major split fest one year. I have that as an unknown armchair lifer. #700 came at 10:00 PM near Nome, Alaska as my birding partner on the trip took upon himself that last evening to push till, I could achieve that goal. A Pacific Golden Plover hopped atop a tundra tussock while sharply calling to attract a mate or warn me I was far, far too close. But that was less spectacular than the pair of Gyrfalcons at 11 PM that same night who were mutually hunting a side slope. One Gyr waited upslope till the other drifted further down slope to scatter prey, with the up slope Gyr the ambush killer. This alternating pattern continued till a scurrying rabbit succumbed. I remember when someone seeing 700 birds was a rarity worthy of a big celebration party. (continued on page 8)

How I Got Into Birding (continued from page 7)

It still is, but thanks to the great Cornell eBird team this is now easily within reach of birders, as is 750 in my opinion. My jinx bird? The only N.A. warbler I have never seen – a Hermit Warbler, as much as anything because I have only birded California at San Diego, and never in Oregon.

After teaching at a local college and seeing many students join bird clubs, I took my path of study to the task of learning the meaning behind those scientific names. New field ID clues came to my birding. Birding history also comes to life through birds named after many early naturalists. Birding now for 59 years I guess I will forever see Myrtle Warblers but had to lose Old-squaw after years of scolding from female birders, albeit most proper. Many ancient and mythological characters have shaped our bird's names and are a tremendous set of stories for bird presentations. I asked college students to use the acronym of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) as their mnemonic for the study and grasping of visual clues when birding. SPCA I explained was the manner in which to learn and observe birds: Shape, Pattern, finally Color and then Anything Else, or All that Gizz. Today the "Anything Else" has become an increasingly major factor in field clues as guidebooks and periodicals are more frequently printing valuable observations that distinguish many birds.

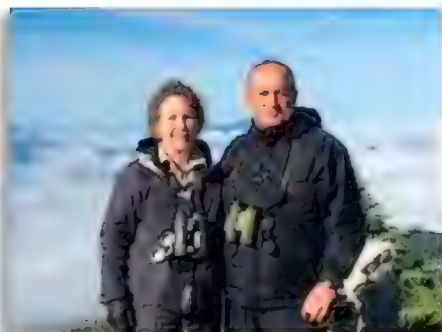
Bird behavior has much to tell us. Jon Young's book *What the Robin Knows* is a grand start for many birders. I now bird primarily to observe the "anything else" and return to my roots of wildlife observer. If you have ever watched Semipalmated Sandpipers on the breeding territory you will always think "Lover and Actor Extraordinaire" of this bird that is so drab in spring and fall on the mid-Atlantic. For further study I want to know why in mid-December in Eastern NC, the two Blue-headed Vireos I watched were so agitated and then aggressive to the three Yellow-rumped Warblers? Both used vocal with sounds I had never heard. How many Bald Eagles does it take to get an Osprey to relinquish its catch? One? Two? The Osprey gave up at the third which was on its it's back beneath the Osprey, at that point no more than 5 feet from the water surface. The adult eagle caught the fish in midair and as quickly and expertly right itself to accelerate with deep wing beats toward shore, and with his immature challengers in tow. It is safe to assume the youngsters learned a lesson.

My life list has always been dictated by bird observation goals. I got to 700 life birds simply seeking field experiences with birds. Chasing rarities has always been down the priority list. I have many successful rarity chasing experiences but do not seek these opportunities. I picked out an Ivory Gull life bird in Delaware on one such trip simply because the flight pattern was out of place within the large mixed flock.

By Karyl Gabriel, CBC Western NC Representative at Large



Karyl Gabriel
with a Florida Scrub Jay



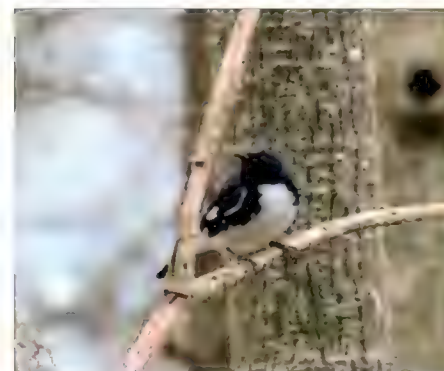
Karyl and her husband Samir
on Whiteface Mountain, Adirondack Mts, New York after
Bicknell's Thrush

I grew up a military "brat," moving every couple of years to my father's next assignment. In the face of ever changing schools, houses and towns, my family kept a sense of normalcy by holding on to the things that stayed the same – family bonds, love of seeing new places and learning about new people, and an innate love of nature that my parents actively encouraged. Wherever we lived, we spent most weekends taking drives, hiking, and exploring.

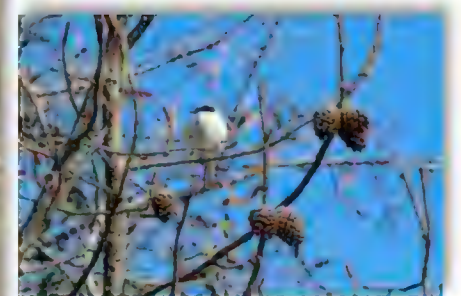
Early in my childhood, we lived in rural Central Texas where our yard backed up to a riparian creek area and vast grazing lands of a neighboring ranch. That backyard was rich in wildlife, wildflowers, field mice, "horned toads," lizards, snakes, crawdads, opossums, raccoons, skunks, spiders, scorpions, butterflies, and birds. It was there that I was first hooked, watching Northern Cardinals at our feeder and a Loggerhead Shrike clean out a nest of mice, and listening to the Scissor-tailed Flycatchers scold each other from powerline perches and Northern Mockingbirds sing all night. But I was still just a bird watcher, enjoying watching the beauty of birds and their activities, and also interested in catching spiders and scorpions to take for school show-and-tell. Later, when my family moved to Maryland, fate saw to it that my mother's best friend was a birder, who intentionally set about looking for birds and identifying them. (continued on page 9)



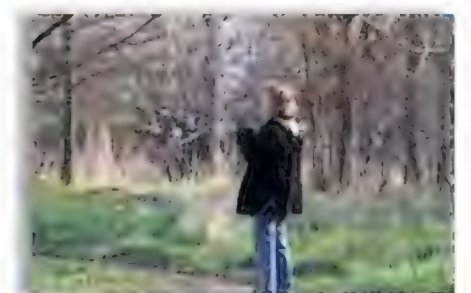
Karyl & her husband Samir,
birding in West Virginia



Black-throated Blue Warbler
she took on Warbler Road in
Virginia



Loggerhead Shrike



Karyl birding

Want to share your own "How I Got Into Birding" story?
Please send your completed story to newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org.

How I Got Into Birding (continued from page 8)



Karyl birding in Iceland



Northern Cardinal,
photo by Karyl

Later, when my family moved to Maryland, fate saw to it that my mother's best friend was a birder, who intentionally set about looking for birds and identifying them. I started going with Rena to the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge that bordered the military base. I learned about migration and warblers. Then I saw a Black-throated Blue Warbler. This was the bird that transformed me from bird watcher to birder. I am grateful to Rena for opening the way to what has become a lifelong passion.



White-throated Sparrow,
photo by Karyl



Karyl birding in Sax Zim Bog with
a broken foot!

From then on, I looked for birds wherever I was. On a return assignment to Texas when I was in high school, it was a thrill to identify for myself a wintering Harris Sparrow and a Painted Bunting pair nesting near our house in spring. Though I took many years off from actively birding to pursue a career and family, my binoculars were always nearby.

About 10 years ago, I discovered and joined the Carolina Bird Club. The CBC reminded me how much I missed birding. What a delight to find this group of like-minded, interesting people and get back to more actively birding again, honing my skills and building my knowledge!

Carolina Bird Club Research Grants Delayed Due to Covid-19 Pandemic

by Craig Watson

Grants awarded by the Carolina Bird Club (CBC) to three separate research grants totaling over \$17,000 will not be implemented during calendar year 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

These projects are:

- 1) **Importance of Seabrook and Kiawah Islands for Red Knot:** Estimating population size, stopover duration, and habitat use - \$1,680 for travel expenses. This is a part of a graduate student project at The University of South Carolina in partnership with South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR).
- 2) **Investigating and Protecting Critical Nocturnal Roosts: Whimbrel at Deveaux Bank, South Carolina** - \$7500 for the purchase of 5 GPS tags @ \$1500/ea. This project was to be a cooperative project between the SCDNR and The University of South Carolina with a graduate student coordinating the work and the university receiving the funds.
- 3) **American Oystercatcher tracking: Modeling the influence of foraging distance on nest and brood survival and development of a tool to forecast future nesting distributions in response to climate variation, North Carolina** - \$8,250 for purchase of GPS trackers, harness equipment, and travel costs. This project supports a Ph.D. project out of the University of Oklahoma and is in partnership with Audubon North Carolina.

Work on these three shorebird species in both Carolinas have been deemed high priority by the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative (<https://atlanticflywayshorebirds.org/>). Due to the core research for these projects being conducted within the university system, all field work and research has been cancelled this season by the universities due to the pandemic. Each of the projects will be able to be completed next season by the students and conservation partners.

CBC Research, educational and conservation grants are available through the Carolina Bird Club.

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lewisburkej@yahoo.com

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Craig Watson, Mount Pleasant, SC

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CBC Newsletter

ISSN No. 0162-7120

For members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.,
Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

Volume 66

August 2020

Number 4

CBC President's Report

by William Burke

As you all know, the Executive Committee has had the difficult task of trying to lead the bird club during the most serious health crisis the world has faced in over 100 years. We have had to cancel our Spring and Fall Meetings. Also, discussions have begun about the advisability of conducting our Winter Meeting scheduled for the Outer Banks in January of 2021. We have scheduled the Spring 2021 meeting for Black Mountain, N.C., but even that meeting may be in doubt. I know of at least three of our Executive Committee members that have said they will not attend a meeting until there is a vaccine. While I cannot poll the entire membership of the club, I do believe we need your input. So please give me your thoughts. My email is lewisburkej@yahoo.com.



While our meetings have been the major activity of the club, the Executive Committee and other committees of the club have been busy. For example, the N.C. Records Committee is welcoming Martina Nordstrand to its membership. Martina is a young and excellent birder. Aaron Given has worked tirelessly to revise the by-laws of S.C. Records Committee. Under Steve Shultz, "The Chat," the ornithological journal of the club, continues to be an excellent publication. The Grants Committee, under Craig Watson, gave a full report in the last newsletter but they already have 3 outstanding grant requests under consideration. Also, under the leadership of Craig and Karyl Gabriel, the Executive Committee is evaluating a substantial conservation grant to preserve some important habitat in North Carolina.

The Nominating Committee of the Executive Committee has faced the challenge of the cancelled Spring Meeting which is our business meeting and the time when we elect new offices and executive committee members. We can hold an election if we have 40 members present or by having the proxy of 40 members. The Executive Committee normally holds a planning meeting in August. I will propose that we hold that meeting by Zoom and that we solicit the proxies of a sufficient number of members so we can elect our new Executive Committee members. I personally am in favor of holding this election by proxies so that I can step down as president. Dr. Steven L. Tracy of Gastonia has agreed to be nominated for the presidency.

Birding with Sunflowers

story & photos by Deborah Roy



During the month of July I visited 2 sunflower fields that were open to the public. One in Salisbury, NC that is on a farm that the homeowner opens to the public and the other at the Draper WMA. Because of the size of these locations, social distancing was very easy and was a great way to get outside and enjoy nature and get some exercise. The sunflowers are beautiful, but my true purpose was to look for birds who love sunflower seeds, nectar, or the plentiful insects on the flowers. The fields did not disappoint. During these visits I found many birds
(continued on page 2)

In this Issue

- CBC's President's Report
- Birding with Sunflowers
- New Members
- How I Got Into Birding
- Executive Comm. Elections
- Princeton Univ. Press New Releases
- Center for Birds of Prey Re-nestings

Birding with Sunflowers by Deborah Roy *(Continued from page 1)*

to include American Goldfinch, Indigo Buntings, Ruby-throated hummingbirds, Red-winged Black Birds, Eastern Phoebes, House Finches, Blue Grosbeaks, Brown-headed Nuthatches, Carolina Chickadees, and Northern Cardinals. If you are thinking of heading out to locate and/or photograph the birds or sunflowers, do your research. Some fields peaked the first or second week in July and some will not peak until September. It all depends on when the seeds were planted and the peak bloom time for sunflowers is



only two weeks, so ensure where you are planning to go still has some blooms. However, it is when the flower begins to fade that is when the sunflower seed begins to form and the feasting begins. I found the best time of day was to get there right before sunrise and a couple hours before sunset. This is when I found the birds to be most active

and there were fewer people at the fields. During mid-day, the heat of the day seem to send them under cover of the trees that were closest to the fields. Also, with photography, the light can be very harsh at mid-day. However, if you want to get your fill of bees and butterflies, you may want to wait to go until late morning, when they seemed to be more active. Make sure you bring lots of water with you out into the fields, as well as wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunscreen. Happy birding!



CBC Executive Committee Elections

We have an urgent need to fill two vacancies for both Eastern and Western NC Members-at-Large for two-year terms on the Executive Committee. Members-at-Large, along with other members of the Executive Committee, guide the CBC by setting strategy and club programs, seeking and responding to members' ideas, and safekeeping the club's resources. In addition, Members-at-Large form the planning committee for Seasonal Meetings. If you are interested in serving your club in either capacity, please contact hq@carolinabirdclub.org.

The nominees for Executive Committee positions are:

President – Steve Tracy – Gastonia, NC (First one-year term)

Eastern NC Vice President - Colleen Bockhahn – Raleigh, NC (First three-year term)

Western NC Member-at-Large – (First two-year term)

Eastern NC Member-at-Large – (First two-year term)

Treasurer – Paul Dayer – Durham, NC

Incumbents in positions eligible for re-election are listed below. The eligible term for re-election is listed following the incumbents' names:

Secretary – Jill Midgett – Charleston, SC (Third and final one-year term)

SC Member-at-Large – Mac Williams – Harstville, SC (Second two-year term)

Have you visited the CBC website lately? www.carolinabirdclub.org

Here you can find news and updates, trip information, past newsletters, The Chat, photo gallery, notable sightings in North and South Carolina, and so much more!



Opportunities for Young Birders

Carolina Bird Club offers scholarships for birders 19 and under living in the Carolinas, who are members of the Carolina Young Birders Club.

Scholarships provide assistance in attending bird-related events, such as camps, workshop, training programs or CBC seasonal meetings.

For more information, visit www.carolinabirdclub.org



Welcome New CBC Members!

Leslie Kennedy
Cary, NC

Dennis McCunney
Greenville, NC

Shawna & Saylor Pochan
Ryan & Arthur Ives
Durham, NC

Marie-Emeline McGee
Landrum, SC

Rachel Wood
Charlotte, NC

Beverly & Anders Gyllenhaal
Raleigh, NC

Evans Lodge
Chapel Hill, NC

Paula Teander
Pittsboro, NC

Tony Johnson
Hilton Head Island, SC

Peter Conway
Chapel Hill, NC

Matt Lawing
Durham, NC

Clarence Mattocks
High Point, NC

John Swan
Asheville, NC

Paul & Kathy Bridgeman
Fayetteville, NC

Cynthia Steffen
Mount Pleasant, SC

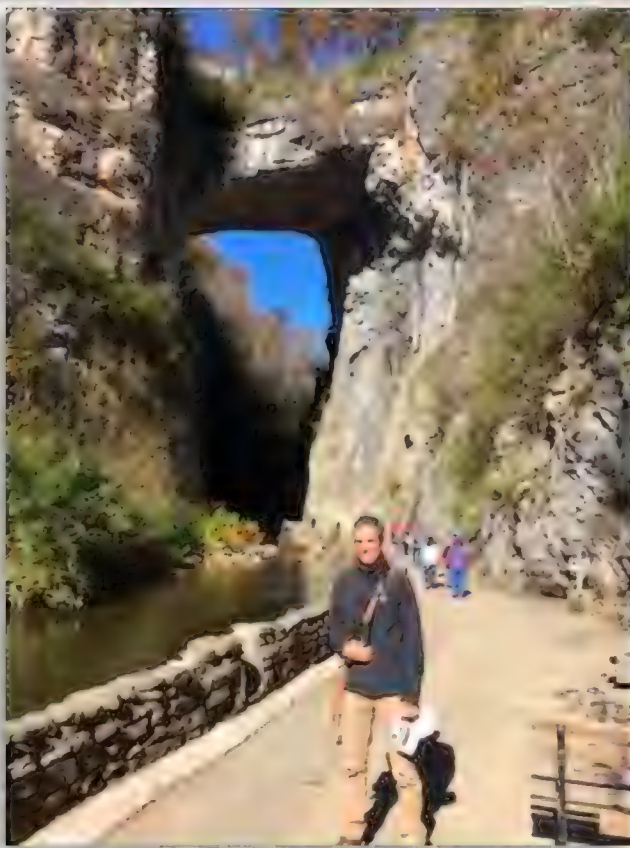
Anne & Blayne Olsen
New Life Members!
Cornelius, NC

Jeff Bruton
Raleigh, NC

Baxter McLendon
Brunson, SC

How I Got Into Birding

by Layton Register



Layton Register at the
Natural Bridge in Virginia

I moved to Charleston, South Carolina, one year ago. Until then, I have lived practically my whole life in Kentucky. I grew up on a farm near a small town called Paris. There were a few fields for crops, but it was mainly barns and pastures for horses. My father bred, raised, raced, and sold many Thoroughbred racehorses and rode in many horse shows on his jumpers Sundance, Windjammer, and others. My father's life revolved completely around horses. To the dismay of my dad, my riding career was short-lived. I think it was about the time I was in lead line that I hung up my boots. Kicking soccer balls, shooting basketballs, and throwing footballs appealed to me more than sitting in a saddle. I stayed in good graces with my father by taking an interest in the Thoroughbreds.

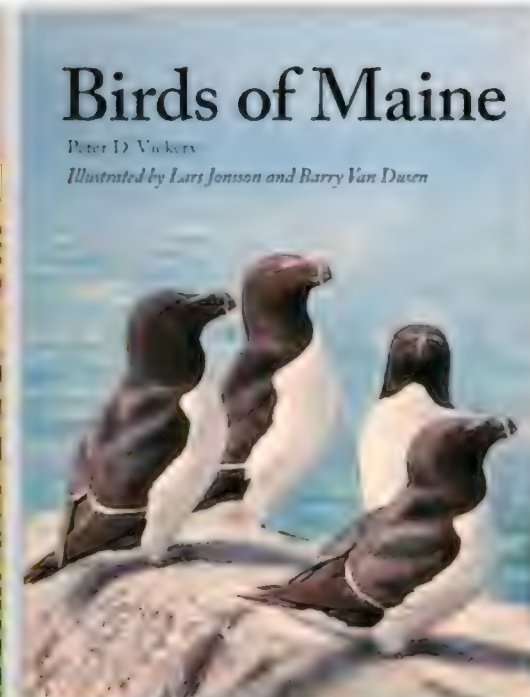
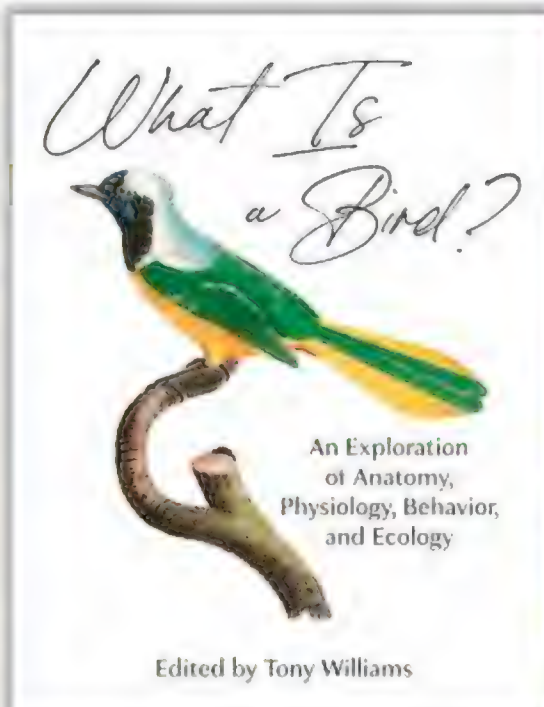
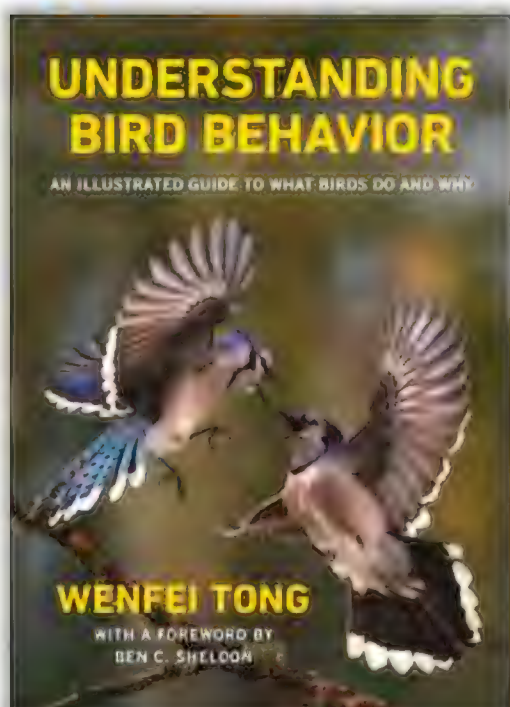
And then my life started revolving around Thoroughbreds after my father took me in 1972 to the racetrack not far from our farm. It is called Keeneland. It was a glorious fall afternoon. The feature race was the Phipps Stable's Numbered Account winning the Spinster Stakes. I was nine years old. I remember the horses, the riders, the crowd, the dresses, and coats and ties as if it all happened yesterday. Much has changed in horse racing since that day, most of it not for the better.

My interest in birds has replaced my time spent in barns caring for horses and mucking stalls, and when not in a barn, engulfed in Thoroughbred pedigrees, sales catalogs, past performances, and race results and charts. This is even to the point where I have built an on-line bird reference. There are so many excellent resources and ways to learn about birds, but I keep coming back to the drawings and writings of John James Audubon. I cannot decide what impresses me more: Audubon's artwork and observations or the physical effort that it required for him to create and publish *Birds of America*. The more I read his accounts for the *Birds of America*, the more I wished they were indexed. So, this is what I am attempting with my website. It is called AskAudubon.net.



Want to share your own "How I Got Into Birding" story?
Please send your completed story to newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org.

Fall 2020 Princeton Nature Highlights



The full release list can be found at:

https://press.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/2020-04/fall2020_Linked_0.pdf

Certify Your Habitat to Help Wildlife!

Wildlife habitat gardens are a haven for local birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. Tell us how your yard or garden provides habitat and the National Wildlife Federation will recognize it as a Certified Wildlife Habitat®.

Creating a wildlife habitat garden to attract birds, butterflies, and other neighborhood wildlife is fun, rewarding, and makes a big difference. It's easier than you might think. Here is what your wildlife garden should include:



Food: Native plants provide food eaten by a variety of wildlife. Feeders can supplement natural food sources.



Places to Raise Young: Wildlife need resources to reproduce, and to protect and nourish their young.



Water: All animals need water to survive, and some need it for bathing or breeding as well.



Sustainable Practices: Maintain your yard or garden in natural ways to ensure soil, air, and water stay healthy and clean.



Cover: Wildlife need places to take shelter from bad weather and places to hide from predators or hunt for prey.

For more information on how to certify your yard, please visit:

<https://www.nwf.org/CertifiedWildlifeHabitat>

CBC Research, educational and conservation grants are available through the Carolina Bird Club.

For additional information visit www.carolinabirdclub.org.

Avian Conservation Center & Center for Birds of Prey **Red-tailed Hawk Re-nesting**

by Bethany Spiegel, Director of Avian Medical Clinic

On May 5th we were contacted about two young Red-tailed Hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) that were found on the ground in Myrtle Beach. Unfortunately, there had been some construction in the area which resulted in the tree with the nest in it being knocked down. We quickly dispatched one of our dedicated volunteer staff, Mary Hayes to assess the situation. As well as being a clinic volunteer, Mary is also one of our transporters and part of our reuniting team. Mary was able to quickly assess that one of the adults was nearby keeping an eye on the young bird. Unfortunately, by the time Mary had arrived, one of the Red-tailed Hawks had passed. Mary contained the remaining youngster and transported him to the Avian Medical Clinic for assessment.

Luckily, no injuries were found. The bird was provided fluids and a quick meal to hold him over and the decision was made to attempt to reunite this bird with the adult the very same day by placing him in a substitute nest. Mary was able to set up one of our nesting platforms in a tree nearby where the bird was found with the help of the finders. The bird was then placed on the platform under the watchful eye of the adult.

One month later, Mary went back to remove the platform and caught a glimpse of the young Red-tailed hawk soaring above the area! We are thrilled to have been able to reunite him with his parents and give him the very best chance of success in the wild! Have a look through the album below to see a play by play of the reuniting of this Red-tailed Hawk!

Please check out the center's Facebook page for additional re-nesting stories, programming, and other updates.



Construction of the surrounding area which caused the tree with the nest in it to be knocked down.



Nesting platform secured to a nearby tree.



Can you spot the adult watching the action from a nearby spot?



The original finders of the birds who also helped us secure the platform. Thank you!



The bird is secured in a soft bag for safe travel up to the platform.



Volunteer Staff Mary Hayes preparing to take the young Red-tailed Hawk up to the platform



The bird is safely placed on the platform.

Thank you to the Center for Birds of Prey for all of your work in helping to save this nestling hawk!



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CBC Newsletter

ISSN No. 0162-7120

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Volume 66

October 2020

Number 5

Carolina Bird Club Donates Significant Funds to Bird Habitat Project in Western North Carolina

by Craig Watson, Martina Nordstrand, Karyl Gabriel, & Guy McGrane

Photos by Travis Bordley



Karyl Gabriel & Martina Nordstrand at Wiles Creek

At its summer meeting in 2019, CBC President Lewis Burke charged the Conservation Committee with finding a high-quality project the CBC could provide funds to that would make a difference in the conservation of birds and their habitats in the Carolinas. Having donated a large sum to a coastal project in South Carolina several years ago, North Carolina Vice President Martina Nordstrand suggested the mountains of North Carolina, and specifically a project for the Golden-winged Warbler. That set the wheels in motion and after several months of working with the Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture (a partnership for bird habitat conservation for the entire Appalachian Mountains) several very high-quality projects were identified to potentially fund. After careful consideration, the Executive Committee (EC) decided to investigate the Wiles Creek Project. Shortly thereafter, the pandemic hit and delayed any site visits to the project area.

However, in early August, Martina Nordstrand, Karyl Gabriel, and Guy McGrane visited the site with staff of the SAHC. A tour of the project area was given and discussions took place regarding the stewardship and management of the property. After

further investigation and exemplary site visit reports from our three EC members, the EC decided to fund this project!

One hundred fifty acres will be protected and 67 acres will be managed for high elevation early successional species. The CBC funds will be pooled with other partner funds to completely fund the protection of the area, as the full purchase price of the property is \$400,000.

(continued on page 2)



Marquette Crockett from SAHC, Guy McGrane, Karyl Gabriel, & Martina Nordstrand at potential Golden-winged Warbler habitat

In this Issue

- Wiles Creek Donation
- Hanahan Residents Recognized
- New Members
- Leucism in Brown-Headed Nuthatches
- Winter Meeting Postponed
- 2020 Grants Update
- Pandemic Birding

Carolina Bird Club Donates Significant Funds to Bird Habitat Project in Western North Carolina *(continued from page 1)*

Our interest in the property is significant and discussions held at the site visit indicate that the project area could certainly be open to CBC members to conduct bird related activities, with one possibility being a new hawk watch. Other activities such as CBC visits, bird surveys, and other activities are possible.

The Wiles Creek Project is within the Roan Mountain Important Bird Area (IBA) and includes five contiguous tracts and one non-contiguous tract in Mitchell County, North Carolina. The following additional conservation values make this property a worthwhile investment by the CBC:

- Shares approximately 0.75 miles of boundary with Pisgah National Forest and is located just north of SAHC's Broad Branch Preserve.
- Within Audubon's Roan Mountain Important Bird Area (IBA) and within 5 miles of occupied Golden-winged Warbler habitat.
- Within the Grandfather - Unaka Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Area (PARCA).
- The eastern boundaries overlap the state-designated Roan Massif Natural Area (Ranked Exceptional as Flagship Conservation Area).
- Within TNC's Roan Mountain West Forest Matrix Block (Tier 1) for large contiguous forest blocks.
- TNC climate resilience rank of Above Average.
- Six streams, including Wiles Creek (NC DWR Trout waters) and three of its tributaries, which flow into Big Rock Creek (NC DWR Trout waters), and two headwater tributaries to Big Rock Creek.
- Contains two meadows that provide excellent early successional habitat – one meadow is approximately 3.6 acres and the other is approximately 6 acres.
- There are five modest, historic wood frame structures in the lower portion of the property. These will be removed by SAHC as time and resources allow, with the exception of a small cabin, which will be used as a part of our "Connecting People with Nature" program, providing housing for researchers, members, and educational outings.

The Wiles Creek Preserve will be owned by SAHC in the long term as a nature preserve and will be managed for priority bird habitats, water quality, and other natural features. The property is a true gem to be protected and managed within the southern Appalachian landscape and Marquette Crockett of SAHC states, "The Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy is thrilled to accept a \$65,500 donation from the Carolina Bird Club for the protection and stewardship of our new Wiles Creek Preserve. The 166-acre Wiles Creek Preserve is exceptionally diverse in elevation and habitat types. It is rare that one property could be so valuable for pollinators and early successional species like Golden-winged Warbler, Field Sparrow, and Chestnut-sided Warbler, but also provide exceptional habitat for forest interior birds including species like Veery and Black-throated Blue Warblers - continuing right on up the slope into habitat for Canada Warbler, Brown Creeper, and who knows, maybe even a Saw-whet Owl. We cannot wait to partner with CBC to explore and utilize this property to promote birding, conservation, and environmental education."

Executive Committee member Karyl Gabriel, who visited the site, said of the property and proposal, "Wiles Creek is a beautiful property with exceptional habitat for many types of birds and SAHC is a proven, trusted partner. This is a remarkable opportunity to preserve important bird habitat in NC, consistent with the CBC's goals. In addition to bird species and habitat, the property supports a wide diversity of plants, amphibians, and other species. In the age of COVID-19, while the CBC temporarily cannot hold our seasonal meetings and field trips, it is nice that we can still be of value as an organization by making a significant investment in the future of our natural environment and challenged bird species. We hope that our members will take pride in this result of their commitment and, maybe, have the chance to visit the Wiles Creek property in the future."

The Wiles Creek Project is one that the CBC can be proud to be a part of, being a true conservation partner in a larger conservation community that strives to protect habitat for high priority species in high priority areas. The CBC looks forward to working with the SAHC and developing activities that further the mission of both organizations.



Martina Nordstrand, Karyl Gabriel, Marquette Crockett from SAHC, & Guy McGrane at the Wiles Creek Northern Hardwood Forest habitat

Hanahan Residents Recognized for Their Hospitality and Study of Limpkins in Berkeley County, SC

by Craig Watson



Craig Watson presenting Don & Barbara Alexander their recognition certificate, photo by Pamela Ford

The Carolina Bird Club gratefully recognizes Barbara and Don Alexander of Hanahan, South Carolina for their hospitality and welcoming of birders to their yard and their neighbor's yards, for over a hundred birders to observe Limpkins at close range, and to be able to document evidence of the first known breeding of Limpkins in South Carolina.

Over a year ago on August 2, 2019, Barbara and Don welcomed a few of us birders to view a Limpkin that began showing up in their yard and the nearby small islands of Goose Creek Reservoir. Barbara had noticed that one particular bird that they had seen appeared different and she began posting the photos of the bird on Facebook, and some individuals told that it was indeed a Limpkin. Through birding and Facebook networks, and knowing this was a significant observation for the state, I contacted Barbara, and the next day, on my way to a family reunion to Tennessee, my daughter, granddaughter, and I stopped at Barbara's where we were able to view one Limpkin perched in a sapling on a small island behind her home.

Little did she know how the birding community would react, and what was to come! That day in August alone saw about 10 birders show up to her yard and see the Limpkin! Word spread through the birding community and birders flocked to the area to see the Limpkin. Just a few days later, a second Limpkin appeared, and we hoped it could be a possible pair!

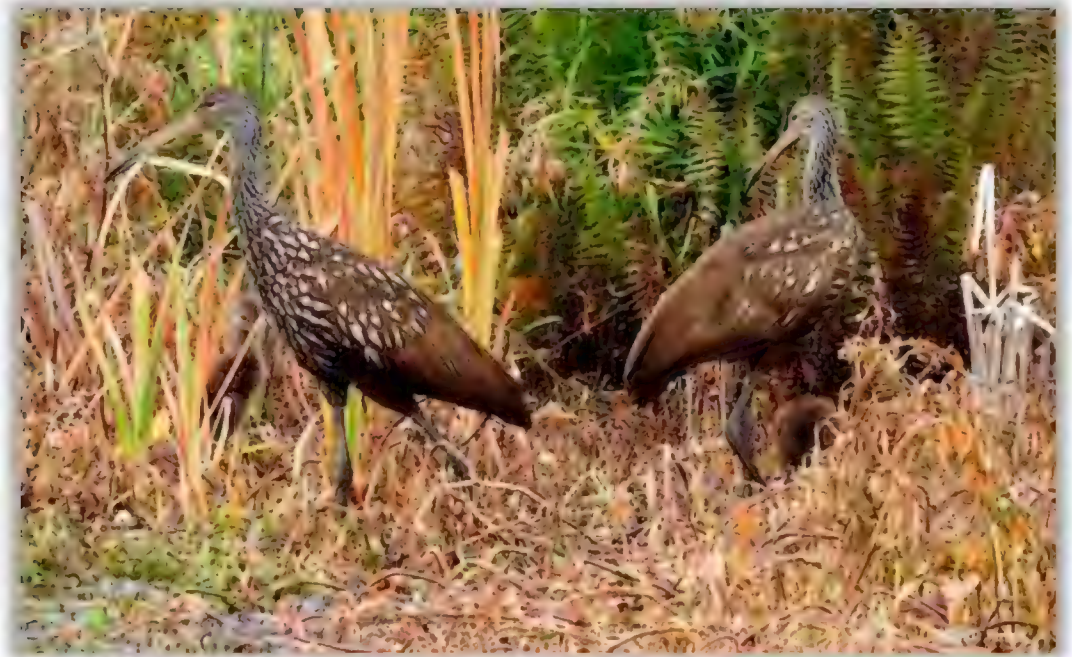
Over the next few months dozens of birders were treated to seeing two Limpkins, and to being treated with great hospitality from the Alexander's that is difficult to describe. Barbara and Don established a texting network of the neighbors so that she could alert the neighbors of birders coming to see the Limpkins! Barbara and her neighbors came to know the birders and everyone enjoyed the fellowship and the birds! Barbara and Don offered their kayaks to birders, and they took birders on their pontoon boat to view the birds.

Barbara and Don talked and interacted with birders as often as possible and with birders coming and going at all hours of the day, they often came home to birders in their yard!

Eventually one bird disappeared and the remaining bird called for hours at night for what seemed like months, and then a second Limpkin reappeared. In addition, as cold fronts moved through the area, we expected the Limpkins to leave, but through the winter, both Limpkins remained. Over the next few months, birders continued to visit the site and watching the Limpkins, and they began exhibiting breeding behavior. Once the pandemic came to be, Barbara and Don were often at home and interacting more with the birders and all were becoming excited about the possibility of the Limpkin pair nesting in South Carolina for the first time ever.

In early June, a brood of young Limpkins was found at the site, documenting the first known record of nesting Limpkins in South Carolina (detailed publication to be submitted for The Chat). Again, the news spread and birders continued to come to the area to view the Limpkin chicks and again, Barbara and Don were there to welcome birders and share in their excitement of the new discovery! Literally, over the past year, over a hundred birders have visited the site, hundreds of observations have been recorded in eBird, and countless hours of observation and enjoyment has fulfilled the lives of the local residents and birders!

Barbara and Don have welcomed birders to their yards, and their neighbor's yards for over a year now. Many of us have become good friends with them. Without their excitement for the birds and the good behavior of the birders, we would not have been able to experience these birds and their nesting here in South Carolina. For this, the Carolina Bird Club has provided the Alexanders with a free year's membership in the CBC and presented them with a Certificate of Appreciation for their unwavering enthusiasm for the Limpkins and their hospitality to birders!



Limpkin family, photo by Craig Watson

(Continued on page 4)

**Hanahan Residents Recognized for Their Hospitality and
Study of Limpkins in Berkeley County, SC** *(continued from page 3)*

Certificate of Appreciation

This certificate is awarded to

BARBARA AND DON ALEXANDER

In recognition of your utmost hospitality in welcoming over 100 birders to your residence to view a very rare species found in South Carolina, the Limpkin, and allowing for hundreds of observations documenting their continued presence. This hospitality provided our state with documentation of the first nesting record for South Carolina, and for this, the Carolina Bird Club offers this certificate as recognition of our appreciation for your willingness to host birders and share the Limpkins in your backyard habitat.

Craig Watson
The Carolina Bird Club, South Carolina Vice-President

6-6-20
Date



THANK YOU BARBARA AND DON! YOU ARE OUR BIRD HEROES!

2020 Grants Update

by Craig Watson

In the June Newsletter, I provided an update on the grants awarded since late last year and the first part of 2020. To recap, several of those grants are on hold due to university policy not allowing fieldwork and these are American Oystercatcher research in North Carolina and Whimbrel and Red Knot research in South Carolina. The status of these projects remain the same and will be implemented next season (2021). Please see details in the June 2020 Newsletter (page 9) for additional information.

Two additional projects have been approved by the Executive Committee for 2020: Three Rivers Land Trust-Save the Yadkin Phase II – Alcoa Lands Acquisition (\$5000) and Migratory Connectivity of Eastern Painted Buntings, Aaron Given, Town of Kiawah Island (\$2,835). Both of these grants required approval by the Executive Committee (EC) since all allocated 2020 funds were already expended through the grants listed in the first section here. The EC unanimously approved both projects and agreed to revisit the annual allocation of funds for grants since high quality grants continue to be submitted. Grants submitted for the remainder of the calendar year will have to be of very high quality and very compelling to fund this calendar year and these will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Three Rivers Land Trust-Save the Yadkin Phase II – Alcoa Lands Acquisition

The goal of the Save the Yadkin Phase II lands is the purchase of 2400 acres and 31 miles of shoreline on Tuckertown Reservoir, which will be owned by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) for the purposes of wildlife habitat conservation, public recreation, and water quality protection. This property presents a wide variety of habitats and its protection will benefit a host of species, including a great variety of bird species that are both residents and migrants in the region. Some of the species are King Rail, Kentucky Warbler, Wood Thrush, Rusty Blackbird, Swainson's Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Prairie Warbler, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Prothonotary Warbler, and Red-headed Woodpecker.

This project is adjacent to the 50,000-acre Uwharrie National Forest and therefore is a landscape scale project which builds off other conservation and recreational lands in the region. Immediately north of this project, is the 2,643 acres of the Save the Yadkin Phase I acquisition on High Rock Lake. The Phase I acquisition also adjoins 1,400 acres of land owned and managed by Three Rivers Land Trust which is also open to the public through our Sportsman Access Program.

(continued on page 5)

2020 Grants Update *(continued from page 4)*

Three Rivers Land Trust formed in 1995 and since that time we have conserved over 40,000 acres of land, transferred over 5,700 acres to the public trust, protected over 283 miles of streams and waterways, and conserved over 15,000 acres of farmland. Just last year, the Three Rivers Land Trust engaged over 1,000 people with the outdoors through outdoor programs, which includes our Sportsman Access Program for hunters and fisherman, our Uwharrie Trail Thru Hike for backpackers, our Leopold Society Youth Program, as well as other events including bird walks, hikes, paddle races, and more.

With the CBC contributing \$5,000, the Save the Yadkin Phase II Project conserves critical habitat, connects conserved areas and wild places, provides access for the public and helps sustain the local outdoor recreation and tourism economies. Our funding and that of our other private and public partners, we will ensure the permanent conservation of an incredibly important resource for both wildlife and the generations that will visit or call North Carolina home. Additionally, our contribution has recently been featured in three regional newspapers:

<https://www.thesnaponline.com/2020/07/30/land-trust-receives-funds-for-save-the-yadkin/>

https://greensboro.com/life/club-happenings/article_2f69d168-0027-5f18-b693-74778784f0ce.html

<https://www.salisburypost.com/2020/08/02/biz-roundup-yadkin-path-montessori-school-creates-co-working-space-for-k-4-students/>



Overlooking the Yadkin River, Three Rivers Land Trust, photo by Craig Watson

Migratory Connectivity of Eastern Painted Buntings, Aaron Given, Town of Kiawah Island

This grant is in the amount of \$2,835 and it is a continuation of Aaron's work on Painted Bunting in coastal South Carolina. Funding will be used to purchase and outfit Painted Buntings with 30 nanotags. Tracking will be done through MOTUS Tracking Stations (www.motus.org) and tracking will focus on long distance movements that will help fill in critical data gaps for the movement ecology of Painted Buntings along the southeastern coast. With the addition of new Motus stations along the southeastern coast, detection rates should increase and provide more detailed information on migration routes, stopover areas, or key wintering areas. The data will help biologists, land managers, and potential developers to identify and preserve specific habitats that are important for Painted Buntings. Additionally, the Motus stations on Kiawah will likely detect birds from other research projects using nanotags, indirectly helping other researchers accomplish their objectives. The Town of Kiawah is providing approximately \$4000 for the purchase of this equipment.



Welcome New CBC Members!

Ann & Michael Smith
Barnardsville, NC

Ed Corey
Raleigh, NC

Nathan Reeves
Conway, SC

Scott Younkin
Raleigh, NC

Theresa Rizzuto
Durham, NC

Paul Saffold
Mebane, NC

Peter Kussin
Chapel Hill, NC

Deceased Member
John Ennis
Leland, NC

Kathleen & Molly Quinn
Rich McLaughlin
Janis McFarland
Chapel Hill, NC

Ronald Shelton
Fayetteville, NC

Michelle Combs
Candler, NC

Upgraded Life Membership
Vicki Nebes
Durham, NC

Mary Kimberly
Gavin MacDonald
Decatur, GA

Barbara Grimmer
Wilmington, NC

Michael Carlisle
Mount Pleasant, SC

Leucism in Brown-headed Nuthatches

by Mark Stanback, Dept. of Biology, Davidson College

Leucism is an abnormal plumage condition caused when pigment, particularly melanin, is not properly deposited on a bird's feathers during development. There is currently some disagreement as to whether leucism is strictly genetic or simply a product of pigment cells damaged during development. Regardless of its proximate cause, leucism, unlike albinism, affects only feathers.

Here I report on leucism observed in two of six nestling Brown-headed Nuthatches (*Sitta pusilla*) within a single nest. This nest was located in a nest box with a 26-mm entrance hole located on the Peninsula Golf Course in Huntersville, NC. The nest contained seven eggs, of which six hatched on 11 April 2020. I banded all six nestlings on 19 April when they were 8 days old. At that point the nestlings were not mature enough to exhibit their leucism. However, when I returned to the nest on 26 April, two of the nestlings were clearly leucistic (see Fig. 1). Because I did not make extensive observations at the nest, I do not know whether any of the adults attending the nest were leucistic. All six nestlings fledged successfully.



Fig. 1



Opportunities for Young Birders

Carolina Bird Club offers scholarships for birders 19 and under living in the Carolinas, who are members of the Carolina Young Birders Club.

Scholarships provide assistance in attending bird-related events, such as camps, workshop, training programs or CBC seasonal meetings.

For more information, visit www.carolinabirdclub.org

NOTICE OF CHANGE:

CBC Winter Meeting – Outer Banks (OBX), NC

From: Friday & Saturday, January 14-17, 2021 *(Cancelled)*

To: Friday & Saturday, January 13-16, 2022



Short-eared Owl by David Alan, Flickr Creative Commons

The sad news is Covid-19 has claimed another event - the upcoming Winter Meeting at the always amazing Outer Banks. OBX Weekend is often the largest attended event we hold every 2 years. The current status of the pandemic has placed an unpleasant burden on the Board's shoulders in planning the CBC Winter Meeting. Comments from members have clearly confirmed the Board's unanimous consensus we would be placing members at risk throughout the Meeting activities at which social distancing is not practical or cannot be established.

The good news is OBX has been confirmed for the winter of 2022. We lament the need to wait another year for the anticipation of the oft discovered rarities and those up-close views of expected, over-wintering species. Place these new dates on your calendars. This should be after a vaccine has been tested in the general population and activity in the host hotel more secure and safe for attendees.

Mother Nature's shows will go on so get out and enjoy the migrants and seasonal treasures.

We expect the [Comfort Inn](#) to be CBC headquarters for the 2022 meeting.

Pandemic Birding in the Dominican Republic

Story & Photos by Steve Shultz

My, how things have changed. A year ago, birders hankering for a taste of the tropics had nearly unlimited choices in every price range imaginable. Cheap trip to Panama or Costa Rica? Sure. High-end experience in Trinidad or Belize? Sign right up!

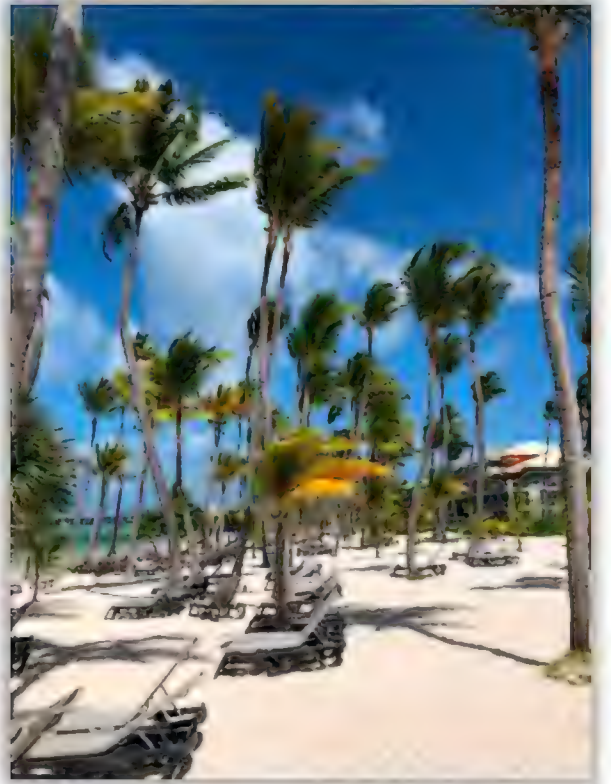
This year? Not so much. Facing a long, hot Carolina summer with not much happening, a quick trip to the tropics seemed like a reasonably good idea. And when I say hot, I'm not talking about just the temperature, but the spiking number of pandemic-related cases here at home. Suddenly being somewhere else did not seem as crazy as it might have a few months before.

Scanning the countries south of us, only three welcomed American visitors without significant hoops through which to leap: The Bahamas, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic. The Bahamas closed back down almost as soon as they opened and Mexico had their own troubles, so we settled on a long weekend trip to Punta Cana on the eastern tip of Hispaniola.

Hispaniola boasts a bird list of around 321 species with 29 endemics and even a trip to the highly modified environment of a Punta Cana resort offered the chance to visit with some of the island's endemic birdlife, as well as the chance to mix and mingle with Caribbean specialties, near endemics, and plain old fun birds. I had the privilege of notching a few local species in Haiti years ago but birding the DR (as it's frequently called) opened the possibility of a number of life birds for my significant-other, Susan, including some newbies from her favorite family, the hummingbirds. Hispaniola sports three hummer species, the Antillean Mango, Vervain Hummingbird (the world's second smallest bird after Cuba's Bee Hummingbird), and the Hispaniolan Emerald.

So, after a quick connection in Charlotte, we touch down after a three-hour flight to the West Indies. And the birds greet us just steps off the airplane! Walking from the jet to the terminal, the clicking "songs" of Antillean Palm-Swifts draw attention to the little black and white bullets buzzing overhead. The palm-swifts nest in, you guessed it, palms, but also seem to really like thatched roofs like those atop the terminal buildings. Later on, at the resort we would sit under cabanas and watch as birds fed young just feet from, and apparently undisturbed by lounging guests.

Adding Susan's second lifer, Stolid Flycatcher, one of the species in the *Myiarchus* genus, outside baggage claim, we make our way to Barcelo's Bavaro Palace property. After temperature checks and health assessments, we're free to explore our surroundings for the next few days. Offshore breakers mark the location of a coral reef, while in the calmer waters near shore, Magnificent Frigatebirds patrol the skies overhead or loaf on nearby pilings. Manicured grounds on the property provide plenty of opportunities for Gray Kingbirds to forage, endemic Hispaniolan Woodpeckers to nest, Antillean Mango Hummingbirds to sip nectar, Palm-Swifts to forage low over the pools, and Caribbean Martins to fly high cover. Palmchats, an endemic species that also represents the only species in its family, are conspicuous as they carry sticks to bulky nests stuck anywhere handy.



Bavaro Beach, Punta Cana



Bananaquit

Sandy paths lead through tropical hardwood forest surrounding maintenance areas, and in this dense foliage we find introduced Village Weavers weaving softball-like nests in loose colonies, the perfectly adorable endemic Broad-billed Tody snapping for insects, Greater Antillean Bullfinches doing whatever it is that bullfinches do, and our first "fall warbler" a Louisiana Waterthrush that may have followed a similar flight path to our own as we crossed the Bahamas and Turks and Caicos on the way to Hispaniola.

But much of our birding happens on or around the magnificent 18-hole golf course twisting between water features and stands of native vegetation. With the resort only at about 15% occupancy, the course is void of golfers, but full of birds. Black-necked Stilts and migrant Spotted Sandpipers seem to prefer greens to the fairways, but groups of West Indian Whistling-Ducks and White-cheeked Pintails appear just as happy foraging in the rough as paddling about the reed-fringed golf-ball swallows.

Pied-billed Grebe chicks stay close to mom while American Coot chicks (the white-shielded form previously known as Caribbean Coot) manage to keep in contact with the correct parent in spite of multiple coot and gallinule possibilities cruising about. Gray Kingbirds are a constant companion as we stop to photograph Purple Gallinules crossing lily pads, Northern Jacanas flashing yellow wings, and night-herons looking suspiciously at our "glass eyeballs."

Pandemic Birding in the Dominican Republic *(continued from page 8)*

Our routine becomes set fairly quickly, a morning bird walk, breakfast, pool/ocean/other pool, lunch, more ocean and pool, an evening bird walk, and then dinner at one of the four specialty restaurants. Each day generated three eBird lists, one for each walk and one for the pool/ocean.

Each walk turns up something different, making the next one highly anticipated. One evening we alert to a screeching overhead and are treated to an uncommon sighting of endemic Hispaniolan Parakeets. On another evening, we are quite far from the room, at the far end of the golf course, thoroughly enjoying flocks of waterbirds. I decide to go just a tad bit farther to eBird some pintails when I turn a corner and find myself staring at three beautiful, pink American Flamingos feeding in shallow water (and presumably not coughing up any stray golf balls).



West Indian Whistling Ducks



Purple Gallinule

Our most vexing sighting must be that of an unidentified raptor. The list of choices is pretty small here, and thus far our only sighting is that of the local, and very pale, subspecies of American Kestrel. Walking a maintenance road along the edge of the expansive resort, I spot a quick flash of wings and think “Black Vulture,” but there are no Black Vultures here. Dark wings with light crescents point to one of the Black Hawks, but those are not supposed to be here either. Later on, during the same walk, we inadvertently flush the bird, but again get only the briefest glimpse and hear a single vocalization. We see and hear enough to determine that the bird is not the expected Red-tailed Hawk, but its identity remains unknown. It would have been a good record if we had been able to get a diagnostic

look! Every birding adventure has to include “the only that got away!”

We certainly enjoyed the opportunity to “get away” for a few days. Susan ended up with a decent list of lifers, and I came away up a pair myself, the whistling-duck and the parakeet. We found the resort to offer an excellent blend of amenities and natural areas; although I must say that the lack of hummingbirds at the small feeder, we placed on the balcony was a bit disappointing. This disappointment was assuaged with excellent Dominican rum, so we can call that one even. Visitors without an aversion to the alcohol molecule might also enjoy the local firewater, Mamajuana, an interesting distillation aged with various local botanicals.

Serious birders would no doubt head for the hills, literally, as the DRs high central mountains offer the chance to meet some of the island’s least common endemics, but for the casual birder, a stay at one of the many enticingly-priced resorts of Punta Cana or Puerto Plata might satisfy the tropical birding itch, at least for a while. Or, the tantalizing taste may be enough to launch a full-scale birding venture in an attempt to collect all the island specialties, but we will leave that for another day and instead enjoy gentle tradewinds ruffling palm fronds, the kiss of the sea on a powder white beach, and that Greater Antillean Grackle that seems to always show up at the pool bar.



American Flamingos

Want to share your “How I Got Into Birding” story?
Please send your completed story to newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org.



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Raleigh, NC 27612

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Upcoming CBC Meetings

Fall 2020 - Beaufort, SC - *Cancelled*

Winter 2021- Outer Banks, NC - *Cancelled*

Spring 2021- Black Mountain, NC - May 6 - 9, 2021

Fall 2021- TBD

Winter 2022 - Outer Banks, NC - January 13 - 16, 2022

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lewisburkej@yahoo.com

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**Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of
December, February, April, June, August, and October.**

www.carolinabirdclub.org

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Membership dues include access to publications: the **CBC Newsletter** and **The Chat**, which is only available on line. Tax deductible as allowable by law.

Cost for CBC bird checklists, including postage: 10@\$5.45, 25@\$13.40, 50@\$27.00, and 100@\$54.00.

Join the CBC at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/dues/>. Enter change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile/>. Order checklists from: CBC Headquarters Secretary, 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst, NC 28374.
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Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

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Number 6

Meet Our New President

by Steven Tracy



Steven Tracy
CBC President

I grew up in Moses Lake, Washington (Grant County), where my initial exposure to birds was waterfowl and upland game birds. Of course, it was impossible to ignore Western Meadowlarks, Great Blue Herons, and Marsh Wrens along the way. As a graduate student in Zoology at Washington State University, I took an Ornithology class and went on my first organized field trips. My primary interest at the time was Herpetology. The next several years were consumed by medical school (University of Iowa), pathology residency, and hematopathology fellowship (UNC-CH).

We relocated to Gastonia, NC, where my interest in birds was rekindled by participating in Project Feederwatch beginning in late 1996. It took a while to distinguish the local sparrows from one another. One of my "Aha" moments was in spring of 1997, when I identified my first Swamp Sparrow in the yard. That got me interested in initiating a yard list and motivated me to start going on field trips with Gaston Audubon (now merged with Mecklenburg Audubon). I started choosing pathology seminars (in part) by geographic location, so I could go birding before or after the seminar, experience new habitats, and bird species. I joined the Carolina Bird Club and went on my first international CBC sponsored trip to Costa Rica with Simon Thompson in 2002. I was overjoyed and nearly overwhelmed with the vast new numbers of bird species. Since then, I have been to the United Kingdom, The Gambia (crossing the border briefly into Senegal), the Pantanal in Brazil, the Santa Marta Mountains in Colombia, Peru, and Cuba. I hope to eventually bird

all of Latin America.

However, it is always good to come back home and enjoy backyard birding. I am beginning my 25th season of Project Feederwatch. My current backyard tally is 159 species with the most recent addition last spring of Solitary Sandpiper. Highlights from the backyard include Evening Grosbeak (11/15/1997), Western Tanager (1/16/1999), Golden-Winged Warbler (9/26/1999), Cerulean Warbler (8/25/2000), Lincoln's Sparrow (5/9/2005), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (9/25/2005), and Connecticut Warbler (10/18/2006). Perhaps my best Gaston County find was Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in June 2009 prior to discovering eBird.

I am a lifetime member of the Carolina Bird Club and I have learned a great deal from our volunteer field trip leaders. I thank them all and I thank those who have organized the CBC meetings over the years. These are trying times with the Covid 19 pandemic and I look forward to when we can all meet together again.

Besides the Carolina Bird Club, I am also a member of the American Birding Association and enjoy taking occasional trips with them. My first ABA trip to Tucson, AZ in July 1999 resulted in 71 new species. I am also a member of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, American Bird Conservancy, National Audubon Society, Mecklenburg Audubon Society, Center of Biological Diversity, Trust for Public Land, Catawba Lands Conservancy, Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, Ducks Unlimited, etc. I try to work for birds on all levels. I hope to meet you all on future CBC field trips. Gulls and shorebirds are my weak points and I look forward to turning these into areas of strength going forward.

In this Issue

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- New Members
- Pine Siskin Irruption
- Len Pardue, In Memory
- Wintering Hummingbirds
- CBC Election Results
- Christmas Bird Count



Welcome New CBC Members!

Mati Karni & Family
Greenville, SC

John Carpenter
Wilmington, NC

Mark & Sarah Dugo Wesley
Chapel, NC

Carl Hacker
Claudia Kozinetz
Duck, NC

Phillip Davis
Davidsonville, MD

Julie Davis
Pawleys Island, SC

Victoria Bannon
Alexis, NC

Thomas Smyth
Lydia Bliven
Augusta, GA

Max Bolin
Fountain Inn, SC

Margaret Knight
Columbia, SC

John Bird
Southern Pines, NC

Phillip Gibson
Lake Junaluska, NC

Fred Stein
Charlotte, NC

Tom Bowles
Chapin, SC

Mary Stevens
Steven Hart
Lillington, NC

Upgrade to Life Membership
Susan Lyon Stone
Carrboro, NC

Jill Dalley
Winston-Salem, NC

Nicola Stevens
Mooresville, NC

Eric Schaub
Greenville, SC

Doug Walker
Aiken, SC

2020 Pine Siskin Irruption

by Deborah Roy



If you've never seen a Pine Siskin, this is your year. According to Audubon, in the past few months, the birds have invaded the United States in search of food, inundating backyard feeders across the country. This is one of the biggest irruption years in recorded history for the finches. As with a handful of other northern species, Pine Siskins can irrupt southward in years when there is a shortage of food in their home range. This year, a meager supply of conifer seeds across Canada's boreal forest has caused the birds to push south in mind-boggling numbers. These birds are not shy and will eagerly come to feeders. They prefer nyger and sunflower seeds. My backyard has also had several Purple Finches which is the first time I have ever seen them in my yard. There is also a chance we could see some Evening Grosbeak and/or Redpolls. They have also moved much further south for the winter than they usually do.



Pine Siskin in my backyard; dozens have shown up this year at my feeders & bird baths
Photo by Deborah Roy

Email problems. As has sometimes happened in the past, Microsoft email servers are blocking all mail from carolinabirdclub.org. This means that if you have a hotmail.com, live.com, msn.com, or outlook.com email address, we cannot send you notifications about club business. Microsoft's advice on this is that each user should add the domain carolinabirdclub.org, or the email address notification@carolinabirdclub.org, to your "contacts" or "safe-senders list". This should allow our email to be delivered to you. Sorry we can't do anything more.



Opportunities for Young Birders

Carolina Bird Club offers scholarships for birders 19 and under living in the Carolinas, who are members of the Carolina Young Birders Club.

Scholarships provide assistance in attending bird-related events, such as camps, workshop, training programs or CBC seasonal meetings.

For more information, visit www.carolinabirdclub.org

Longtime WNC conservationist, past president of Blue Ridge Audubon, dies

Written by Karen Chávez

(reprinted with permission, Asheville Citizen Times)

“Nice,” “kind,” “wonderful,” aren’t the first words usually used to describe a newspaperman, but those who knew Len Pardue were unanimous in describing him that way.

Pardue was a retired newspaper reporter and editor but was well known and beloved in his adopted hometown of Asheville as an excellent birder, master gardener and all around “good man.”

Pardue, 81, died Oct. 1, according to his family, including wife, Esther Pardue.

“To me he was the epitome of a gentleman,” said Tom Tribble, a longtime friend and birding buddy of Pardue, who served on the board of the Blue Ridge (formerly Elisha Mitchell) Audubon Society from 1998-2017 and was the club’s president from 2011-2013.



Len Pardue, center, past president of the Blue Ridge (formerly Elisha Mitchell) Audubon Society, and his wife Esther Pardue, stand with Tob Tribble and the sign for the Pardue Wetland, an area named in their honor at the Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary. Len Pardue died Oct. 1. Courtesy of Blue Ridge Audubon Society

Pardue could often be seen working with his wife or other club members well into his later years at the bird sanctuary that hugs Beaver Lake off Merrimon Avenue in North Asheville, doing maintenance work, pulling invasive plants or greeting visitors.

“He was an outstanding birder, a better birder than I am,” said Tribble, who was president for six years of the club.

The group, which has about 1,000 members, leads public bird walks, participates in local and nationwide bird counts for the betterment of science, owns and maintains the bird sanctuary and works on conservation issues.

The more than 30-year-old club also made news this year by removing its name-sake, Elisha Mitchell, from all of its signs, materials and websites after discovering the 19th century geologist was an avowed racist.

“He was such a good friend and a good man,” Tribble said of Pardue. “He was very calm, very reserved and very thoughtful. He had that institutional knowledge.”

Pardue led the group through its \$150,000 fundraising campaign to upgrade the sanctuary in 2010-11.

“The bird sanctuary was being loved to death. The fundraising completed the boardwalk to make it handicap accessible, built the gathering area at the entrance and expanded overlooks by the lake and redirected the trail around the lake so that runners and dog walkers weren’t running through the sanctuary,” Tribble said.

Pardue graduated from Duke University and Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. His career included positions as managing editor for the Louisville Times and the Courier Journal in Louisville, Kentucky.

After retiring in 1997, Pardue moved to Asheville and became “deeply engrossed in bird-watching and pursued that avocation in much of North America and in six Latin American countries,” according to his obituary, which he wrote himself.

He almost immediately joined the local Audubon Society as a board member.

“He was such a go-getter. He had a lot of experience organizing things. He had already been president of the Carolina Bird Club,” said Marilyn Westphal, a friend and past president of the Blue Ridge Audubon Society.

“He was so dedicated and single-minded about getting things done and doing it right. He was a really nice guy. He would never get angry. He would just get a wry smile on his face if he thought something wasn’t right. It’s a real loss to the birding society,” she said.

Pardue also volunteered at First Presbyterian Church and the Cooperative Extension Service's Master Gardener program, and enjoyed protecting land he and Esther owned in the Sandy Mush region of Buncombe County.

In addition to his wife, Pardue is survived by two sons and many other relatives.



Trudie Henninger stands on a bench to get a better look as a group goes on a bird walk with Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society at Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary on Saturday, April 1, 2017. Angeli Wright/awright@citizen-times.com

Below is the link to the original article:

<https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2020/10/05/blue-ridge-audubon-past-president-and-asheville-conservationist-len-pardue-dies/3623948001/>

Go ahead and leave your hummingbird feeder up!

There are hummingbirds that over winter in North Carolina

By Susan Campbell

Yes, it's true! There are hummingbirds at sugar water feeders across our state during the cooler months. They are not common, but they are widespread and not as rare as we once thought. Although most of the individuals investigated have been Rufous Hummingbirds, there have been a variety of western species. Very few have turned out to be our summertime Ruby-throated Hummingbird. To-date twelve species of hummingbird have been documented while visiting North Carolina during the non-breeding season. But identification of these birds is difficult since most are nondescript females or juveniles. They tend to look very similar; their identity is often based on color, shape, or size of just a few feathers.

The early view that hummingbird feeders left hanging in the fall deter Ruby-throateds from migrating is false. These tiny marvels begin to head south as early as late July due to hormonal changes when the days begin to shorten. Food supply nor the weather has any effect on their behavior. Therefore, feeders left up can only help late migrants or supplement the diet of winter visitors. Although hummingbirds in general eat mainly small insects, nectar is a significant component of their diet year-round.

Please contact the state's hummingbird researcher, **Susan Campbell**, if you see or hear about a hummingbird anywhere in the greater Charlotte area between November 1 and March 15. Susan is an affiliate with the Museum of Natural Sciences who is studying and documenting these individuals. She can be reached at (910) 949-3207 or susan@ncaves.com.



Selasphorus hummingbird in the snow, Charlotte, NC,
Check out that perfect snowflake on her back.
Photo by Deborah Roy

No special care is required for these hardy winter hummingbirds. The birds will appreciate a feeder with the usual 4:1 (water: sugar) nectar solution. The solution will not freeze unless the air temperature around the feeder drops below 27 degrees F. Most days during the winter this will not be a problem. And on colder nights, the feeder can be taken indoors at dark since hummers do not feed at night. Due to slower fermentation rates during cooler weather, the feeder should only need cleaning and refilling about once every two weeks.

If you live within a half mile of a wet area (lake, river, stream, pond or even a golf course water hazard), your chances of attracting a winter hummer are quite good. Just be sure your feeder is hung so that you can monitor it easily—especially early in the day when hummingbirds are most active.

For more information go to www.naturalsciences.org/nchummers



Selasphorus hummingbird in the snow, Charlotte, NC,
Photo by Deborah Roy



Selasphorus hummingbird in spring after spending the winter in my yard, Charlotte, NC,, Photo by Deborah Roy

CBC Election Results

By Steve Shultz



The election results have been certified! No, not that election. This one that involved no debates, no mail in ballots, and none of those pesky mud-slinging television ads. And best of all? No phone calls! Yes, I am referring to the Club's annual election to confirm new members of the Executive Committee!

The Executive Committee consists of volunteers who plan seasonal meetings, review grant requests, seek out ways to support conservation, encourage young birders, and undertake dozens of other tasks and initiatives.

Historically, the Club elected new officers by virtue of an in-person vote as part of the annual spring meeting. Well, 2020 had something to say about that. With cancellation of the spring and fall 2020 and winter 2021 meetings, the election could not occur as it did in the past. After careful deliberation and a creative web-based solution engineered by Kent Fiala, the Club's webmaster, our first virtual election was held in November. After an initial solicitation for "nominations from the floor", members voted online to accept the presented slate of nominees.

We welcome our new President, Steve Tracy, along with Eastern North Carolina Vice-President Colleen Bockhahn, Western North Carolina Member-at-Large Julie Lee, and South Carolina Member-at-Large Ed Blitch.

The committee currently has one vacant position, Eastern North Carolina Member-at-Large. If you reside in the eastern portion of NC and are interesting in serving the Club in the role of Member-at-Large, or for more information on the role and responsibilities, please contact Paul Dayer, head of the nominations committee, or any member of the Executive Committee.

While this year's election process has come to a close, we are already looking forward to next year's vote, which we hope will occur in person at the spring meeting. Several positions have terms expiring in 2021, so if you are interested in serving your club, please contact Paul or any committee member for more information.

The full committee listing, along with contact information, is at

https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/main/exec_comm.html



North & South Carolina Christmas Bird Counts



Take part in National Audubon's 121st Christmas Bird Count this season. The count period runs each year from December 14 through January 5. If you go to the CBC website (address below). You will find a list of counts near you. If you'd like to participate in a count, contact the organizer listed in the table. (Click on their name to get their email address.)

Christmas Bird Counts are an excellent chance to join fellow birders of all experience levels, and allow you to participate in a tradition that dates back to 1900! And there is no longer any fee for participation!

More information can be found on the Carolina Bird Club website at:

carolinabirdclub.org/christmas/

or by going to the National Audubon website

www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count



Barred Owl,
Photo by Deborah Roy



Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

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at Pinehurst, NC 28374
and additional mailing offices

Upcoming CBC Meetings

Winter 2021- Outer Banks, NC - *Cancelled*

Spring 2021- Black Mountain, NC - May 6 - 9, 2021

Fall 2021- TBD

Winter 2022 - Outer Banks, NC - January 13 - 16, 2022

CBC Board Members

President

Steve Tracy, Gastonia, NC
stevepath1@aol.com

Vice Presidents

Colleen Bockhahn, Clayton NC
Guy McGrane, Deep Gap, NC
Craig Watson, Mount Pleasant, SC

Secretary

Jill Midgett, Charleston, SC

Treasurer

Paul Dayer, Durham, NC

NC Members-at-Large

Lester Coble, Ernul, NC
Marilyn Westphal, Hendersonville, NC
Julie Lee, Nebo, NC
Vacant

SC Members-at-Large

Ed Blitch, Charleston, SC
Mac Williams, Hartsville, SC

Immediate Past President: Lewis Burke, Columbia, SC

Editor of The Chat: Steve Shultz, Apex, NC

Website Editor: Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC

Headquarters Secretary: Carol Bowman, Pinehurst, NC,
hq@carolinabirdclub.org

CBC Newsletter Editor: Deborah McDougall Roy, Charlotte, NC,
newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org

**Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of
December, February, April, June, August, and October.**

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The CBC Newsletter is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Founded in 1937, the membership is open to anyone interested in birds, natural history, and conservation. **Current dues are:** Individual & non-profit, \$30; Family and Business, \$35; Student, \$15; Patron, \$50 and up; Life, \$500; Associate Life (in household with Life Member), \$100 (both Life memberships can be paid in four annual installments).

Membership dues include access to publications: the **CBC Newsletter** and **The Chat**, which is only available on line. Tax deductible as allowable by law.

Cost for CBC bird checklists, including postage: 10@\$5.45, 25@\$13.40, 50@\$27.00, and 100@\$54.00.

Join the CBC at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/dues/>. Enter change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile/>. Order checklists from: CBC Headquarters Secretary, 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst, NC 28374.
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